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RAILWAY HERALD LIBRARY.

Should the Government Acquire our Railways?

BY A CLERK, *Great Northern Railway.*

WHEN the inventive genius, George Stephenson, constructed the locomotive engine, and proposed to set it running on rails, it is a matter of history that when the powers were applied for, and Parliament referred the matter to a Committee, some very silly legislators, both of the Upper and Lower Houses, sought to pooh-pooh the whole idea, but this did not prevent the powers being granted; and in spite of most strenuous opposition on the part of landowners, town councils, and other parochial authorities, the lines were laid, and traffic commenced to run upon them; and when their utility was by this means demonstrated there was, as might have been expected, an ugly rush to make new lines, and new companies sprung up like mushrooms. Left to themselves, promoters selected the districts likely to pay best, and hence there are duplicate and triplicate lines between the same places, while less promising districts were neglected. This happy-go-lucky system has had its continuous opportunity. The initial mistake was in disregarding the systematic distribution of railways with reference to the whole country. "The history of the railway mania of 1844 and 1845," says Hole, "is a melancholy exhibition of human greed. Those years gave a direction to our railways from which they have suffered until the present time. In 1844 248 schemes were lodged with the Board of Trade; in 1845, 815! The schemes of 1844-45 were mostly planned as speculations, not by men who meant to make railways, but to sell their legal power to do so. In 1850 Parliament permitted the speculating promoters to drop their schemes, but they did not wait for Parliament, and pro-

posals involving forty millions of capital and 2,000 miles of railroad were abandoned without its consent. It is needless to say that thousands were ruined by these schemes. As if the speculators were not enough to injure the railway system, there was, in addition, the opposition of landlords, who exacted compensation for their land, etc., said to be two or three times its real value. Add to these the Parliamentary expenses of engineers, agents, and counsel, estimated at seventy millions, which a return quoted by Mr. S. Laing showed to be upwards of five millions even in the ten years preceding 1886, and which, he says, 'is money wasted, which might have been used in carrying out important improvements.'"

These excessive costs and compensations were incurred before a spadeful of earth was removed, or a rail laid, yet they have to be taken into account for dividend. Not a ton of goods or a passenger is carried that does not pay a share of this needless expenditure. It is hardly to be wondered at that the smaller companies, under the circumstances mentioned, found it very difficult to pay a dividend, and so there followed a somewhat extensive amalgamation; and in the main it must be admitted that this amalgamation has turned out well, both for the railways and for the public. Prior to this, it was almost impossible to take a ticket for any distance: changes for passengers were frequent; and the goods at many of the junctions had to be transhipped, causing great delay and expense. The public viewed with astonishment these numerous lines formed into larger systems; alarm was expressed at these monopolies becoming more powerful than ever. A Select Committee, in 1846, agreed that there was ground for alarm, but recognised that "it enabled the companies to conduct their operations with less expense to themselves, and so reduce the charges to the public, better arrangements could be made, increased accommodation provided, and life and property would be more safe." As a check upon amalgamation, it was recommended that as a condition, "the rates and tolls of the amalgamated companies should be subject to revision—i.e., reduction." As the companies dreaded competition, this proposal caused some useful schemes of amalgamation to be withdrawn. The advocates of the State control of railways think that if the whole of the lines had amalgamated and been controlled by one management, under the control of the State, our railways would be of more use to the public than they are now.

The public have the same idea about the different rail-

way companies now as they had then. There is a delusion that the companies compete with each other. Hole, in his "National Railways," says, "It may be safely averred that some score of persons control nearly one thousand millions of capital and 20,000 miles of the most important communication of the country," and it is idle to suppose that these few men will enter into active competition, the one with the other. In the early days competition was indulged in with ruinous effect to the companies, but they soon came to terms for their mutual interest. The Railway Clearing House was established, and by means of its two or three thousand clerks in London, and its numerous number-takers at the various junctions throughout the country, the differences between the various lines were arranged. A classification of goods and mileage rates which were binding on all companies was early arranged, and in this way they all hang together. It is supposed that towns which are competing points enjoy greater privileges than those where no competition exists, but the contrary is mostly the case, owing to Clearing House regulations; and where a new line is brought to a place where one already exists, the rates are not lowered, as some suppose, but the public have to support, and find interest for two sets of directors and shareholders instead of one. Mr. S. Laing says: "Every pound wasted comes ultimately out of the pockets of the travelling public, and not only is competition no effectual protection for the public, but, on the contrary, it will be found in practice to be about the greatest misfortune that could befall them." Mr. Grierson says: "Competition is utterly impossible; to vigorously compete would be simply ruin." Sir G. Findlay says that "all companies were banded together to maintain rates, and no company could reduce a rate without the consent of all the others serving in the district." In spite of this, a Select Committee reported in 1882 that it was admitted the companies charge as much as could be got without reference to the cost of performing the service. The farce of competition should surely be decently buried after the exhibition we have had during the last four or five years in the contest between the railways, whose directors, as one man, resisted the appeal made to them by the traders, who, asking for bread in the shape of lower rates, were offered the stone of the maximum rate. We know the severe struggle that followed, and that the companies had to bow before the storm of public opinion; but the maximum rate is held in abeyance till a more convenient season. These rates are not fixed on the basis of the service rendered, but on the arbitrary

classification of commodities, according to their more or less expensiveness. Even if "higgling the market" were the best means of settling rates, we are without it. We have them settled instead by rival barristers, before a Committee of the Lords and Commons, who know little, if anything, about the matter, aided by a Chairman, who silences the contending parties by splitting the difference, but more often giving everything to the companies. Though the companies shun competition in rates and fares, they compete in what is called facilities. They thus injure one another, but do not greatly benefit the public. Having piled up expenditure of millions on stations, etc., they claim that as accommodation has been provided, somebody must pay for it; and that somebody is the trader and the travelling public. These facilities cost money. The cost of working the line is creeping up at a much greater rate than the receipts, the result being that where shareholders received 8 to 10 per cent., they have to be content with half of that amount, notwithstanding the immense growth of population and increased travelling. Sir G. Findlay, said the L. and N.W. Railway passengers increased 87 per cent., but earnings only 44 per cent., and while accommodation increased 76 per cent., gross receipts only augmented 28 per cent., and he took a gloomy view of the prospects of the shareholders. And this is the experience of all the large companies who are constantly increasing capital to carry out new works and improve the lines, but are not in a position to earn a corresponding return for the shareholders, and I think the time is not far distant when the shareholders themselves will hail with delight the prospect of a more secure property, by the railways being taken over by the State. I know this proposal is regarded by some as being of a Socialistic character, but it is no more Socialistic than was the proposal to take over the telegraphs, and is no more to be dreaded than the State having the monopoly of the Post Office, or corporate and other towns owning the gas and waterworks, or electric lighting, or trusts having control of harbours and waterways for the benefit of the public. Before the advent of railways the high roads were the chief means of transit of the country. They were certainly farmed in the interest of individuals by the turnpike system, but an enlightened public did away with this system some years ago, as it was thought the roads should be free to all, and their maintenance should be a public duty. There were the canals also, some of which have fallen into disuse, and others have been brought up by the railway companies, and the freight charges have been

largely raised by them, so that they should not enter into competition; and by this means a giant monopoly has been created. I hold that all monopolies of *this* kind should be in the hands of the people, and should be worked for their benefit. There are several advantages which would be gained by the transfer; all unremunerative competition would be abolished, and useless boards of directors would be dispensed with. Speaking of railway directors, Mr. R. W. Perks, M.P., himself the legal adviser of several railway companies, said: "As a rule the average English railway director knew very little about the details of his line. Directors were chosen because of their Parliamentary or territorial influence, and even now some of the directorates of English railways were crowded with titled directors, who knew little of business life and still less of the democratic requirements and rewards of the present day." Such men as these should be cashiered, and the State would be able to do it.

If railways were in the hands of the State, it would take railway stocks out of the hands of the Stock Exchange speculators—a very desirable reform. Again, there would be no need to run empty trains. So long ago as 1866, evidence was given before the Royal Commission by Mr. Stewart Grey, of the L. and N.W. Railway Company, that three, and sometimes as many as seven, empty seats were despatched for one full one; that if this waste of room was prevented, the cost of travelling would be greatly reduced and the punctuality increased; that the cost of conveying empty carriages was nearly as great as that of full ones. Rival companies run contemporaneous trains half-full sometimes at a positive loss.

From London to Manchester about 32 trains run daily; to Liverpool, 28; and to Scotland, 16. There is an immense waste of work, of coal, and of passenger accommodation; in the last-named particular the waste is simply colossal. In 1888, the passenger carriages of the United Kingdom numbered 35,548, and the passengers by them 742,499,164. That is, that each carriage during the year carried 20,887, or less than 58 per day. A traveller between Dover and London says, "Having been obliged to go twice a week to Dover, I over and over again observed that if the two companies would combine one joint train, both companies' dividends would be appreciably increased. I contend that, at least for six months out of the twelve, two half-loaded express trains at the same time tearing through the country from Dover is an unparalleled waste of power." The State could also adopt a lighter goods wagon for the light traffic. The dead and unproductive weights

hauled about the country on goods trains is enormous. It could also adopt some system on which to base goods rates, instead of the haphazard system now in vogue. It is a scandal that foreign produce should be conveyed from our ports to the great centres at a cheaper rate than our own productions. I am very much in love with the foreigner, but that does not prevent me from being more fond of my own countrymen. Patriotism does not enter into the calculations of the railway directors; the State would improve this state of things. Again, the large Clearing House staff in London and the provinces, instead of existing to settle differences, would be able to devote their talents to something productive, and to assist the, in some cases, undermanned railway staff. Again, put railways in the hands of the State, and there will be a wider extension of lines to districts whose entire welfare depends on the railway. Branch lines in connection with the great trunk line could be constructed for smaller towns and agricultural districts. These places are not tempting enough for the existing companies. The State alone, acting for the nation, could undertake them. A scheme of this sort might help to settle the vexed question of how to keep the labourer to the soil, by putting him into communication with a market for his produce on the same terms as his foreign rival. The Irish light railways, which are constructed by funds provided by the State, are instances of what could be attempted in this direction. The State control of railways is not a novel idea. Belgium owns and controls most of its railways, and conveys in its own boats the mails to this country. Contrast this with our own Post Office, at the present time arranging to send its parcels by road because it is cheaper, the railways wanting 55 per cent. of the receipts. Our Colonies own their own railways to a large extent, and they are worked on a system and are a success. It is quite possible to do it in our case, and it is suggested by those who have studied the question, that an experiment should be made with Ireland. Speaking on this matter, the late Sir George Findlay, manager of the L. and N.W. Railway, told the Royal Commission of 1886 that if the Irish lines were amalgamated into one system, he could manage the concern with four days' work a week, and have the other two days to spare for fishing, and dispense with the 270 directors, 37 secretaries, and 20 managers it then required!

The upholders of the present system say that the railways would be made the shuttlecock of the rival parties in the State. This might happen if England were situated in South

America. We are also warned that if the railways were put in the hands of an unscrupulous Finance Minister the whole thing would come to grief—as if Finance Ministers were the only unscrupulous people in the world! This must be a joke perpetrated by some of the railway financiers.

But it is not proposed to hand over the railways to every Tom, Dick, and Harry that happens to turn up, but to the permanent officials who have helped to build up and bring the railway system to the state it now occupies—whose duties it will be to work the railways in the interest of the nation, instead of the shareholders, and who will study to bring the system to a larger perfection, instead of studying to outwit a rival. I do not enter here into the question of payment by the State for the railways, should they be taken over. I do not propose that they should be confiscated, but purchased and paid for. There are various proposals made, of any or all of which much could be said, but I do not place them before you. When the time comes doubtless some Heaven-born financier will appear on the scene, and the transfer will be made without difficulty, and to the satisfaction of all concerned.

My First “Interchange.”

BY A GUARD, *Great Eastern Railway.*

TAKE whatever class you like—Moderates, Progressives, Unionists, non-Unionists, New Women, old “Geesers,” etc.—you will find them all pretty generally agreed on one point—viz., the absolute necessity in these very hard times of getting full value for their money. Also, when by some lucky turn of Fortune’s wheel, we get an extra dose for our coin, we all allow that there is much cause for congratulation. As every railwayman knows, Fortune’s wheel has lately turned in favour of the majority, in the matter of getting about the country cheaply; and as I recently took my stand in the public rank at the Waterloo Station booking-office for the purpose of procuring a ticket for the main line express, I fully appreciated my good fortune, and enjoyed to the full the ecstatic emotion that the majority of grasping humanity would give way to, if about to collar a piece of pasteboard of the market value of nearly fourteen shillings for three and fivepence. Why, I

know some passengers who are bosom friends of mine all the year round, bar Christmas, who would smile themselves silly at the bare prospect of such a bargain.

There is much quiet fun to be extracted from the process of getting an "Interchange," if you play the game properly. No need to flash your voucher like an excited signalman's flag; nobody will take it for a bank-note—it's the wrong colour. But do as I did; by a dexterous sleight-of-hand movement—acquired by most railwaymen, who have, like myself, had considerable platform experience in the art of passing coppers noiselessly into whichever pocket there happens to be most room—I passed the voucher through the orifice, at the same time inquiring, in clear tones, the price of a third return to Netley, over eighty miles distant. Behind me stood a stout old gent., muffled up to his blue, blossoming cheeks in a huge wrapper; his breath came over my shoulder like a breeze from the Rum Quay, down in the docks. The old chap made no remark when the clerk shouted, "Three and five-pence; Netley return"; but a dazed look came over his face, and he evidently thought he had one glass too many. "That's a cheap lot, your'n, guv'nor!" whispered a Waterloo Road coster, who had just paid the same amount for a quarter the distance, and stood blocking the way, counting his change. "Friend of mine!" I remarked pleasantly, cocking my thumb over my shoulder in the clerk's direction. The coster looked after me, as if in doubt whether to speak to the clerk or levy a little blackmail on me. I secured a cosy back corner seat opposite two young curates, who, from their talk, I learnt were old college chums who had unexpectedly met on the platform. Although there were five feet-warmers in the compartment, in the exuberance of my feelings, and for the good of the water-tin firm, I planked down my 2d. and had one for myself, though I did not use it for my feet, knowing full well they are better without them. Any old commercial will tell you that more benefit is derived from placing the warmer along the bottom of the door, where I forthwith placed it. "Through carriage for Fareham, next door, sir!" said the examiner to one of the curates. "No, thanks!" said that gentleman, "I have something much better than a through carriage here—an old friend; I'll change later on." Mr. Examiner silently acquiesced, though his look of disapprobation plainly showed he considered a through carriage to be the acme of earthly bliss for a railway traveller. The young clergymen's tales of old times were, to an uninitiated one like myself, highly amusing. One of them was plump, the other

very thin—lantern-jawed, in fact. The plump one's appetite for tobacco—he was constantly emptying and filling an old briar—was only equalled by his companion's fondness for light pastry, of which he had a large paper bag full on his knees; bath buns, sponge cakes, many varieties of biscuits, disappeared with surprising rapidity. Said the plump one, "How do you like your new diggings, old fellow?" "Excellent! Majority of parishioners very well-to-do; highly respectable neighbourhood, in fact," said the thin one, between his bites of a bun.

But keeping on the go from four a.m. proves an excellent soporific about seven p.m., which was now about the time; and after vainly endeavouring to keep awake, Nature finally asserted her rights, and as the plump man filled and lit his fourth pipe, I fell asleep to the music of the lantern-jaws grinding a hard biscuit, and dreamt of that mystical G. O. M., the father of the I. P. T., who at that blissful moment held a place in my estimation second only to that of my other father, the dear old man I was on my way to see.

Referring back to the foot-warmer business, care should be taken to inform passengers of its whereabouts if one is placed along the threshold. I was thoroughly awakened on arriving at Winchester by the abrupt entrance of a burly countryman, who was returning from Saturday night's market. He came in headlong over our foot-warmer, and on scrambling to his feet he at once joined in the conversation in such a vigorous style—addressing himself to me especially—that for the rest of the journey no warmers were needed—the air was so full of good old Hampshire *patois*. There is no necessity to dwell on the bracing influence of the sharp burst home on a moonlight, frosty night, over a hard country road; nor to enlarge upon the strange delight of a quiet Sunday at home with the old people, the relief experienced on looking at the old pew, and finding that the Parish Council has not yet hypnotised the squire, nor paralysed the parson—a relief tempered with some regret that no rumours are as yet rife that "taties" shall grow on the barren furze common, which has not yet been turned up within the memory of man. All these and many other novel experiences are now open to most railwaymen who care to avail themselves of the beneficent I. P. T. Refreshed and invigorated by my breath of breezy air, on Monday morning, large as my lord, I travelled back to town by the express, having for a travelling companion an interesting individual who had just landed at Southampton, having come from India. As he had also been in most parts of the

globe, his stories were as acceptable as his cigarettes, of which he carried a large supply loose on the seat beside him. His residence in India was in the midst of the opium fields at Malwah, and while there he had acquired the habit of eating opium. Though graphic in his description, words failed him when he essayed to describe to me the despair he felt when, after the ship had left the Indian shore, he found he had left his opium behind him. But through the kindness of a gentleman who plied him well with coffee, he got over the craving. And now with a lively recollection of the fearful reaction that follows the exhilarated don't-care feeling that opium produces, he blessed, with all his heart, the lucky forgetfulness that caused him to leave the drug behind. I merely mention this to show certain good-intentioned people who denounce tobacco as the most pernicious weed under the sun, that if half this former opium-slave told me was correct, then tobacco is, in truth, a divine weed compared with opium.

London looked up cold and dreary, after the clear Channel atmosphere; and when my new friend motioned me to the refreshment bar what could I do but cheerfully acquiesce? "A glass of bitter," said I. "Fourpennyworth of whisky warm!" said the Anglo-Indian, as he planked down the needful. But he was so taken with the appearance of my glass of bitter—it must have been the colour; it certainly wasn't the gigantic size of the S. W. glass—that he decided to change his whisky and have one himself. But, not wishing to give the doubtless hard-worked damsel behind the bar unnecessary trouble, and as I was getting a bit numbed, I offered to forego my usual enmity to spirits and change glasses with him, to which arrangement he pleasantly agreed, and as I travelled over the frozen Thames to Cannon Street, the unaccustomed draught coursed warmly through my benumbed frame, and I reflected comfortably that decidedly this Interchange business is certainly one of the blessings of our time.



A Chat about Chemistry.

BY A LINEMAN, *Somerset and Devon Joint Railway.*

SIGNALMAN.—Good morning, Mr. Lineman. Will you please help me to understand the working of my batteries?

Lineman.—For this some little knowledge of chemistry is desirable.

S.—Owing to alternate duty we could not attend regularly, so that neither my mate nor myself can join a science class; moreover, it is all very well for young men to study science. My idea is, when a man becomes a husband, he ought rather to study husbandry.

L.—A knowledge of chemistry is useful to everyone, and would find a place even in garden work; but now let us try to understand the batteries.

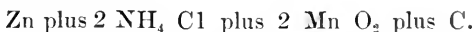
S.—Which is the best battery for railway work?

L.—A plough-horse is fit for hard work, but a hunter is able to jump the highest fence; and so, whilst one battery is fit for continuous currents, other forms are suited for high resistances. Three forms of cells are largely used—viz., the Leclanche, Daniell, and Fuller Bichromate. If a bluestone battery worked a repeater 23 hours out of the 24, the zincs would keep themselves clean; but if the battery worked only a few seconds per day, the zincs would be coated with copper and the electro-motive force diminished. A Leclanche cell, on the other hand, will not stand constant work, for if an armature, such as a bell-hammer, which makes a local current contact, should hang up to the bell for several hours, the line-man, when he arrives, is helpless to restore the normal strength to the cells. He must patiently wait an hour or two, whilst the manganese absorbs more oxygen from the atmosphere.

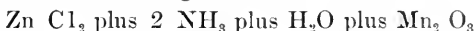
S.—I should be intensely interested if you could enable me to understand how your chemicals are charged into my bell signals.

L.—Chemists write shorthand by means of symbols. Letters stand for elements, and little figures, placed at right side of the letters, express the number of atoms, whilst big figures, at the left, show us the number of molecules. Thus, O means oxygen; O₂ two atoms of oxygen. Mn is the symbol for manganese. 2MnO reads in plain English, "Two

molecules of manganese dioxide," each composed of the union of one atom of manganese with two atoms of oxygen. NH_4Cl is ammonium chloride, or sal-ammoniac, and we can understand at a glance that it is formed by the union of one atom of nitrogen (N) with four atoms of hydrogen (H) and one atom of chlorine (Cl). Zn is the symbol for zinc and C for carbon. We may now write down in chemical language the contents of a Leclanché cell:—



When a bell key is touched, the battery is put into operation, and the elements rearrange themselves thus:—



The chlorine has united with the zinc, forming chloride of zinc. The salt dissolves in the liquid of the cell. The NH_4Cl set free is a compound radical, called ammonium, which cannot be isolated, but immediately splits up into ammonia NH_3 and free hydrogen; now the ammonia dissolves in the liquid, and when this is saturated it escapes as a gas. Linemen get a good sniff of it frequently when a battery cupboard-door is opened. The free hydrogen passes through the porous cell and unites with some of the oxygen of the manganese, to form (H_2O). It will be observed that there are only three atoms of O remaining in the manganese, and there were four to start with. It remains only to add that the chemical actions of elements entering into combination are accompanied by the evolution of heat, as well as electricity. A Leclanche cell is a suitable appliance, enabling us to utilise the latter.



Some Humours of Railway Correspondence.

BY A GOODS CLERK, *Caledonian Railway.*

I CAN well imagine a future historian or novelist, who intended reproducing some phase or other of nineteenth century life, reading whatever copies of official correspondence he could lay hands upon, and fixing upon brevity, not to say bareness, as the outstanding characteristic. Subsequently he would be correct so far as the railways of Great Britain are concerned. If he concerned himself with the railway correspondence of our near neighbour, France, however, he might be inclined to add to these that of hyper-courtesy, if I may be allowed to use such a word. Certainly their mode of finishing a letter with the phrase, "be so good, gentlemen, as to accept our kind salutations," far exceeds our curt "yours truly" in dignity and politeness.

Naturally one would think that the briefness and formal nature of the bulk of railway correspondence precluded the possibility of humour, intentional or otherwise; but so long as human nature is not infallible, there will occasionally occur inadvertent slips causing more or less ludicrous results. To begin with, the use of shorthand may fairly be saddled with the responsibility of a few minor errors. On one occasion shorthand notes referring to papers dealing with damage to a consignment of margarine in crocks were handed to another clerk to be written. Next morning it was found that the sentence, "enclosed claim is preferred for damages to American clocks," had been written instead of the sentence "enclosed claim is preferred for damages to margarine crocks," thus giving rise to some jubilation in the manager's office at the expense of the station, and causing the clerk to feel a pang of annoyance that the finger of scorn should be pointed at him. On another occasion the force of an important sentence was entirely nullified and made ridiculous by the erroneous reading of a word in the shorthand notes. The letter was an emphatic avowal of the company's prerogative, and said that the railway company was not responsible for consequential claims. This duly appeared in the tissue letter book as "the railway company is not responsible for substantial claims."

It is often thought that language is a somewhat difficult medium by which to convey a precise meaning, and especially is this the case when it has to be condensed. I remember once a memorandum wherein, if the word "note" were read as a verb, it was nonsensical, but if read as a noun the meaning was obvious. It happened thus. Government stores require to be accompanied by a document which is usually attached to the invoice, and the remark made, "note attached." In this instance a hamper of drugs from a Government depôt to a medical officer in connection with a military fort arrived without this document, and was refused in consequence. The report issued to sending station had the usual heading, consignee's name and particulars of goods, and said, "Note not received here. Trace forward at once. Goods on hand." Receiving station read this to mean, "Please note the goods have not been received. Trace forward at once. Goods on hand," and naturally asked for an explanation. While what was meant was that the note said to have been attached to the invoice was not received, and that the goods were on hand, waiting receipt of that document.

Errors of speech are, of course, much more frequent than errors in writing. But a good deal of station correspondence is dictated, and it may happen that an error of speech committed by the dictator becomes fixed in writing. Here is one which has a somewhat grim humour about it. In answer to a letter desiring a canvass to be made upon a trader to secure traffic, the following reply was dictated, duly written, and passed for signature:—"Above firm inform me that Moyes, Cambridge, died in February, 1892, and they state they have had no transaction with him since." The solemn assertion that the gentleman had died, and since his departure from this world to that bourne whence no traveller returns, no communication had been held with him, proved sufficient to excite the risible faculties even of the grave superintendent.

Mistakes in spelling and grammar would afford numerous other instances, but sufficient has been said to justify the title of this short paper.



Smartness.

BY A PASSENGER GUARD, *London and North Western Railway.*

AN article contributed to these columns some time ago by a G.N. Rwy. Stationmaster anent the working of trains has, by the 'immoderate nature of its contents, somewhat disturbed the equanimity of a great number of your subscribers, judging from the remarks which have come to hand since it appeared. That the essay in question contained several unjust comments on the general working of an important body of railwaymen cannot be gainsaid, and as such it is calculated to produce a considerable amount of acrimonious controversy which is altogether undesirable.

Amongst the accusations which he brought forward to strengthen the puerility of his ideas on trains losing time was one detailing a deplorable want of "energy" and "smartness" on the part of the drivers and guards working the trains: qualities which, he said, were fast becoming lost to the railway service.

Now I maintain that the railway servants of the present day are, generally speaking, much snarier than those of days gone by. Not only are they better educated, and, consequently, more intelligent and ready to grasp the new inventions which are continually springing up in connection with their work, but the vast increase in traffic of late years at our large centres, and its concomitant bustle and high pressure, makes it imperative that the employees who have to deal with it should be smart in every way; and if they are not so when they join the service they are very soon drilled into the necessary sharpness and "go."

To define a smart railwayman is to imagine one who is quick and active in his movements, and yet, at the same time, who possesses a thorough knowledge of his work, and a method in his briskness which will enable him to cope with his duties satisfactorily, and bring them to a successful issue. It cannot conscientiously be said that a man is smart simply because he bustles about in an excited manner; for, with all his hurry-scurry, he only succeeds in committing some blunder at every step he takes, which upsets the work and calculations of other men besides himself.

The fact of the matter is, too many officials, nowadays, make a mistake in imagining that the smart individual is the one who is bouncing and self-assertive in his general dealing. I have always failed to understand, myself, why a man who goes about quietly and quickly, and does a certain amount of work in a finished manner in fifteen minutes, should be reckoned less smart than his fellow-workman, who takes five minutes longer to do the same work, and does not do it so well. I can only suppose that the naturally quiet man has not got enough of what is commonly called "spar" about him; he knows what his work is, and gets it done accordingly; but the other man, who habitually "throws his chest out" while at work, and orally lets people know that he is doing something, gets the credit for smartness.

Noise and smartness are apparently synonymous terms with some of our railway functionaries, for they are unable to distinguish the difference between the two.

How often do we see, too, on a busy platform, a porter who is of a particularly smart appearance. He is well set up, as if he had served his time in the Army; his hair is plastered in a peculiar wave or curl across his forehead, and, generally speaking, he looks spick and span all over; but, sad to relate, the only smartness he ever shows is in the rapidity with which he performs the disappearing trick when the van-loads of milk arrive by the early morning trains.

Smartness in appearance does not always imply energy and smartness in the performance of duty; but where the two can be found combined, the more marked is the effect. It is considered a requisite quality for every railwayman in the battle of life, and when your G.N. essayist decried in a general way the want of it in railway guards, he either wilfully perverted the truth, or erred from inexperience. Taking them on the whole, they are as smart a body of men as any in the railway service, for they are mostly drawn from a school (the platform of a large station) which assures the necessary energy for their improved position. What is more, in travelling about as they do, they are better able to judge who are the most energetic in dealing with the traffic than an egotistical individual who is always stationary, and therefore solely guided by what transpires at his own station. If the trains are always despatched with commendable celerity from this particular station, this does not prove such to be the case at every roadside station at which the train stops, and, consequently, the cause of delay to rest entirely with the driver and guard!

In conclusion, I would ask G.N. Rwy. Stationmaster if he is aware of the number of small stations at which guards have to unload the luggage and parcels from their vans, shut the carriage doors—in fact, be a sort of general utility man—while the stationmaster and his porter stand looking on, not sufficiently aroused from their lethargic condition to put one foot in front of the other in order to assist him.

Outwitted.

BY T. H.

SOME ten years ago I used to run the engine of the 4.30 p.m. express from M—— to B——. One cold March morning, while I sat in my cab awaiting the conductor's signal, I observed my fireman, Tom Brady, and another man standing together upon the platform of the station engaged in conversation. A moment after my glance fell upon them they both advanced towards the engine.

"Watson," said Brady, "this is my friend Mr. Barston. He wants to ride as far as C—— on the machine with us."

"All right," I replied, promptly, for Brady was a good fellow, and, although I did not usually like to have a third person on the engine, I was unwilling to disoblige him.

"Jump on, Mr. Barston," said Brady, and the stranger obeyed with alacrity.

"If my presence will inconvenience you in the least, Mr. Watson," he remarked, "say so, and I'll go into one of the cars."

I replied that I had no objection whatever to permit him to ride on the engine since Brady wished it. He thanked me for what he was pleased to term my courtesy, seated himself, and began surveying the machinery with evident interest and curiosity. While he was thus engaged the conductor gave the signal to start, and off we went.

"I saw Atway, the cashier of the M—— Bank, get into the drawing-room car," said Brady, as we moved away from the station. "I suppose he has a good bit of money in that leather bag of his. He's probably going to C—— with it."

"I suppose so," I replied. "It's getting to be pretty well known that that little bag he carries so often contains the

bank's money, and if he isn't careful he'll be robbed one of these fine days."

"Oh, Atway is a sharp fellow," added Brady. "Don't you worry about him. He can take good care of himself."

"Nevertheless," interposed my passenger, "I agree with Mr. Watson that he runs a big risk, and that he's pretty certain, sooner or later, to lose his bag of money. There are plenty of fellows as shrewd as your friend the cashier can possibly be, who are constantly on the look-out for such chances to make a few hundred dollars as he affords them every time he travels on the road with the bank's money in his possession."

And he proceeded to relate the story of a daring robbery of a bank messenger which he had lately read. The man had been knocked down and robbed in a crowded street in broad daylight.

"There are many more just such rascals," said Mr. Barston, in conclusion; "and your friend the cashier may fall a victim to one of them some day on his way to C——. By-the-way," he added, consulting his watch, "at what time shall we be due at C——?"

"We shall be there in twenty minutes," I replied.

"I can change there for New York, I believe?"

"Yes; a train leaves C—— for New York ten minutes after our arrival."

At that moment we entered a tunnel, and but for the light of the fire in the furnace we should have been in total darkness. The tunnel was about a mile in length, and it took us two minutes to run through it. Just as we emerged from it the bell on the engine rang furiously.

"What's the matter? Who's ringing that bell?" demanded Mr. Barston, and I imagined that his face turned a shade paler.

"Something's wrong on the train," I replied, as I pushed in the throttle and put on the steam-brake.

As the train came to a stand, Wilson, the conductor, came running up, his face as pale as my passenger's. I leaped from the cab, and advanced to meet him, followed by Brady and Barston.

"What's the matter?" I asked. "Who stopped the train?"

"I did," replied Wilson. "Mr. Atway, the cashier of the M—— Bank, has been robbed of twenty thousand dollars."

"Is it possible? Have you got the thief?"

"No; the rascal jumped off the train while we were in the tunnel."

"Well, the train can't wait here till he is caught. We must go on."

"We are a little ahead of time, and will wait a few minutes. I'll take the responsibility," said Wilson.

"When did it happen? How was the robbery committed?" I asked.

"It was while we were coming through the tunnel. Mr. Atway has always had the apartment near the door in the drawing-room car to himself. He had it to-day. When we were about half through the tunnel, he heard the door of the compartment open. It was pitch dark, and he could see nothing. At the same moment he detected the odour of chloroform. Then a handkerchief saturated with the drug was pressed to his nostrils, but he held his breath and did not inhale it. As he attempted to rise to his feet, the bag was torn from his grasp, and he was dealt a blow upon the forehead. He, however, had seized the robber by the arm, and held on like grim death, shouting for help. But the roar of the train drowned his cries. The scoundrel started for the door, and Atway, who still held on to his arm, was dragged after him. When they were out on the platform the thief managed to shake him off, and this done, he sprang from the car."

"The chances are, then," I said, "that he was killed or injured?"

"Yes. Atway and a number of other passengers have gone into the tunnel to see if they can find him or the money, and here they come back again."

I glanced in the direction of the tunnel, and saw a crowd of men advancing towards us. Mr. Atway was at the head of the party, and in his hand he held something which, as he neared us, I recognised as the bag in which he usually carried the bank's money.

"Have you found it?" cried Wilson, as he advanced to meet the cashier.

"We found the empty bag," replied Atway. "The money is gone and the thief escaped. I'm a ruined man."

"I'm sincerely sorry for you, Mr. Atway," said the conductor. "But let us trust that the rascal will be captured. And now the train must go on."

"Of course," added the cashier. "I'm greatly obliged to you all, gentlemen, for your kindness."

The passengers re-entered the cars, and I returned to my engine, followed by Brady and his friend Mr. Barston.

Both my fireman and my passenger had a great deal to

say about the robbery. I did not join in the conversation. I had noticed one or two circumstances which made me thoughtful. I believed that I could assist in the capture of the robber, and I was trying to decide how I could best prove the justice of my suspicion.

"We shall arrive at C—— in time, after all," said Mr. Barston, presently, as he looked at his watch. "I was afraid that the delay at the tunnel would prevent my catching the New York train."

"We shall reach C—— in time to connect with the New York train," I said; "but I'm afraid you will not go to the city on it. There's a little matter to be cleared up first."

"What do you mean?" demanded Barston, while Brady stared at me in speechless amazement.

"I mean just this," I said. "I think you know something about the robbery of the bank's money."

"Are you crazy, Watson?" interposed Brady.

"He's stark, staring mad," cried Barston. "Why, man, I was there on the engine with you when the robbery was committed."

"That's so," I said. "But, nevertheless, I think you know something about it, as I said before."

"Do you dare call me a thief, sir? You shall pay dearly for this insult."

"If you succeed in proving yourself innocent," I replied, "I will beg your pardon."

"That will not prevent me from thrashing you within an inch of your life."

"We shall see," I replied, with a smile, which I could not repress.

"Now see here, Watson," cried Brady, "you must be mistaken. It is impossible that Mr. Barston knows anything about the affair."

"How long have you known him, Brady?" I asked.

"About three days, but——"

"Exactly, I thought so."

"I demand to know your reasons for suspecting me of the crime," blustered Barston.

"Well, I don't mind acquainting you with them," I said. "In the first place I noticed, when you unbuttoned your overcoat a short time after we left M——, that the inside pockets of the garment were filled with bank-notes."

"Well, what of that? The money is mine. Can't a man have bank-notes without being a thief? Besides, this was before the robbery was committed."

"I'm not so sure about that. In my opinion, the robbery was committed before Atway got on board the train. In short, I believe that you and the cashier were accomplices in the theft, and that Atway's story of his struggle in the dark with the robber was a lie. I saw his significant glance at you while we stood by the tunnel, and your nod in reply."

"This is folly. I never saw the man before in my life."

"If you are innocent, you will have no difficulty in proving the fact."

"I will not allow you to detain me. I tell you I will not submit to this outrage."

I made no reply. The more he stormed, the stronger became my conviction of his guilt.

For a few moments neither of us spoke. Then as we approached the suspension bridge over the C—— river, and I reduced the speed of the train, Barston made a quick movement, and, had I not seized him by the shoulder, would have sprung from the engine.

"I'll be even with you for this some day," he exclaimed, with a malignant glance, as he shook off my hand.

"I believe you are right, Watson," said Brady, as he looked searchingly into the face of the discomfited villain. "But I hope that you don't think that I had any knowledge whatever of his guilt."

"Certainly I do not," I replied. "I am sure you had no suspicion of it."

"I met him for the first time at Jake Ellis's saloon the other night," continued the fireman, "and have seen him several times since. Happening to meet him this afternoon at the station, and believing that he was going to New York, I asked him to ride on the engine."

"And luckily he accepted," I added. "If he had not, the chances are that he would have escaped."

Three minutes later we arrived at C——. Barston made no further resistance, and within five minutes after our arrival both he and Atway were in the hands of the authorities.

The cashier at first asserted his innocence as loudly as his companion had done, but when the money in Barston's pocket was identified as that which had been stolen from the bank, he made a clean breast of the affair.

It seems that Barston, whose real name was Dalton, and who was Atway's brother-in-law, was the originator of the plot by which the two conspirators had hoped to clear a cool ten thousand a-piece. The pair had met in the depôt at M——, where they managed to transfer the money from the leather bag to Barston's pocket. Then Atway had got on board

the drawing-room car with the empty bag, which he had thrown out of the window while the train was passing through the tunnel. He had then rushed to the conductor with the story of the struggle in the dark with the robber, and the train had been stopped. The cashier acted his part to perfection, and had not his confederate (who, according to their plan, was to return at once to his home in New York with the spoil) consented to take that ride on the engine, the plot might have been successfully executed.

The bank gave me three thousand dollars the next day, so I considered myself handsomely paid for my afternoon's work.

Atway and his brother-in-law were in due time sentenced to long terms in the State Prison.

Payment of Members.

BY A PORTER, *Caledonian Railway.*

IT seems to an outside observer strangely irrational that, excepting the vast majority of the members, every official in the House of Commons, from the Speaker to the very doorkeeper, enjoys a handsome salary; and stranger, absurder still—every barrister, attorney, and writer is paid for his time in full, and his expenses, when before Committee.

The second grievance arising from non-payment of members is that it effectually debars the working man from electing a representative from among his fellows. Now the possible and, I venture to say, highly probable prospect of a considerable labour element in British representation of the near future is a source of grave apprehension amongst our time-honoured political parties. That, to my mind, accounts for the tardiness that marks the progress of this reform. I presume that no one will attempt to gainsay me in this—that possession of wealth does not always indicate possession of intelligence, nor, inversely, does poverty a deficiency. I am, I confess, kindly disposed to simplifying complicated issues by simpler analogy. Nobody would trust the care of a valuable gold repeater to the first mechanic who made a gratuitous offer of his services. How that offer would be treated we all know. Well, then, the care of our much more valuable Constitution ought to be intrusted to

the most competent men obtainable. Of Watt, Stephenson, and all the glorious host of famous lowly-born we speak as born genii who found their proper spheres; but amongst the humble are there no born legislators? and, granted there are—for I am loth to believe that an impartial Creator has granted to the wealthy a monopoly of legislative talent—can they achieve the position for which they are naturally fitted? The attainment to a seat in Parliament is only feasible by the rich; election expenses and absence of salary effectively militate against the entrance of any of slender means. So that our “vulgar Catos” are most severely handicapped. Again, what, I ask, does a portly old squire with a rent-roll of, say, £20,000 know of poverty or of the aspirations of the multitude? What can he know of them? Britons are not yet so dispirited to wear their hearts on their sleeves, so that any daw might examine and prescribe for them. The wealthy man’s intimacy with poverty is a mere bowing acquaintance—superficial at most—often but academical. Even to those few who, with the best intentions, invade his humble home the typical Briton sullenly refuses to divulge what he considers his family affairs; rather would he hopelessly suffer on than bear the stigma of acknowledged poverty. But were his representative one of his own class, conversant with each varying phase of the poor man’s struggle for existence, the deeply sensitive elector would be spared the exquisite torture of these petty inquisitions; he would be relieved from the unpleasant necessity of discussing his actual feelings by garbled ambiguity.

We will resume our comparison. Supposing the owner of the watch to have acceded to the request of his benevolent friend, and this latter individual, while attempting to repair it, to have further injured the watch, what then? Would it not have been more to the owner’s interest to have confided the task to some tradesman, from whom he might conscientiously have demanded compensation for any injury sustained during the process of repair? So it is with our members. Their position, onerous if properly filled, does not yield them a fraction; so that instead of electors conferring favours on the elected, the latter are actually philanthropic patrons of the electorate. As things stand we have no tangible claim upon our members’ time; but by endowing them with a reasonable salary they would become responsible to us for their full time and abilities. For the present we must be contented to possess our representative without inquiring too closely into that person’s deeds or misdeeds; which individual, remembering

that his office, pecuniarily considered, is to him a losing concern, feels not the smallest compunction in conforming the execution of his duties rather to personal interests than to the mandate of his constituents; and until membership of the House of Commons ceases to be an expensive function to the members, we can scarcely blame them.

Never, I suppose, since first men by men were governed did a proposed reform receive unanimous support, the subject of this paper by no means excepted. It is generally conceded that, in these days of £100,000,000 Budgets, £200,000, sufficient to give each member an annual salary of £300, would be only a trifling addition to taxation. Indeed, the expense is regarded as almost the least objectionable feature of the scheme.

There is, however, another and more serious argument advanced against this proposal. Some, pointing to the United States and to Australia as terrible examples, warn us that the payment of members will mark the introduction into our legislative assemblies of the professional statesman; as though cupidity and stupidity were the two dominant traits of our national character. They who voice this prediction insinuate—though I believe with good intention—that with all our national aptitude, all our grand national institutions and vaunted educational privileges, we are not competent to form, unrestricted, our own choice of candidates, and that patriotism, integrity, and honour are at so low an ebb that thousands are ready wholly to abjure them at the prospect, however remote, of three hundred pounds a year! For my part, I prefer to trust my fellows more than that.

I had always thought, and do yet think, and in this history supports me, that in proportion as the spirit of Democracy has penetrated into and permeated our Parliament, bribery and corruption have decreased. No one who has compared, either by personal experience or by faithful narration, the Parliamentary proceedings of thirty or forty years ago with those of latter times will doubt the purifying influence of Democracy; and are we now to halt thus suddenly in the onward path, scared into stagnant helplessness by the ever-existing possibilities in the extreme depravity of human nature? When we broil a steak we run some risk of burning our fingers; should we therefore eat flesh raw?

Finally, the comparison is feeble. Is it really supposed that our hoary old Constitution will follow placidly in the wake of so comparatively juvenile and therefore playful an institution as the governing body of the United States, or

meekly in the footsteps of such infantile gambolling bodies as the Australian Governments? From some antagonistic lively prophecies one would imagine that payment of members will produce a fungus crop of such candidates as are calculated to strike the fancy of Kansas cowboys, Colorado miners, or Australian bushrangers. What a touching tribute to boasted British intelligence to suggest that these would probably find their way into our Second Chamber, and in large numbers!

But let us assume that the fearful consummation is attained: our members are paid; let us try to grasp the immensity of the evil that these raven-prophets prognosticate. They threaten us with a deluge of mercenary candidates for Parliamentary honours. But would the possible acquisition of an income of £300 prove fatal to the common sense of the whole nation? Would there be no disinterested patriots remaining? We were else in a pitiable plight indeed. Surely there would be honest, discerning Britons enough to insure the election of a good man against a vulturous crowd of indifferents. And, once possessed of the desired income surely the sanest course would be to strive by actions to show good claim for continuation; for it is scarcely just or reasonable to apprehend a rapid degeneration to venality as the certain sequel to £300 a year. Besides, assuming matters at the worst, the fierce rivalry for membership would certainly insure the immediate exposure of any attempt at bribery or corruption.

I have wandered to great length, and will in a few words conclude. Payment of members I regard as one, and an important one, of the improvements necessary to make of the House of Commons a truly Democratic reflection, both in opinions and in composition, of the country at large, instead of, as at present, a representation of which some 36 per cent., or more than one-third, consists of aristocratic neophytes and expectant lawyers.



The Working of a Single Line by Staff and Ticket.

BY A CANVASSER, *Metropolitan Railway.*

THE railway historian of the future will probably describe the above-mentioned system as "an ingenious but primitive arrangement, long since superseded by the train tablet or electric staff"; but as that time has not yet arrived, some of our readers may be interested in a description of the method of working trains over single lines by this old-fashioned but perfectly safe plan.

Staff and ticket working, in the first place, means that no engine or train is allowed to leave any recognised staff station on a single line unless the driver is in possession either of the staff or ticket.

The staff for each section, or pair of stations, is usually a round iron or brass rod, about fifteen inches in length, with a disc at one end inscribed, "Proceed to (say) Tweedledee" on one side, and on the reverse, "Proceed to Tweedledum." One end of this staff is key-shaped, and is used to unlock the ticket-boxes at the other end of the section, and in the absence of the staff these boxes cannot be opened. The tickets are lettered as follows:—"To driver and guard of No. — train. You are authorised to proceed from Tweedledum to Tweedledee, and the train staff will follow." Suppose, for example, that the man in charge of the first-mentioned station has three trains to pass to Tweedledee in succession before receiving one in the opposite direction, and the staff is at his end of the line. In the case of the first and second trains, he would unlock the ticket-box with the staff and take out a ticket, and after filling in the necessary particulars and signing it, would hand it to the driver, at the same time showing him the staff (as it is an essential rule of staff working that every driver must actually see the staff or have it in his possession before starting). The third or last train would take the staff; and once this is parted with, the line is absolutely blocked in that direction, and nothing can be allowed to travel until the staff is again returned from Tweedledee. It will therefore be seen that any number of trains can be forwarded in one direction so long as the staff is retained, and if the regulations are, in every detail, strictly

adhered to, there is no possibility of any accident occurring. In the few instances where mishaps have taken place—the Seacombe and Hoylake, notably—it has been found that the working has been contrary to the rules, and the slightest deviation in this respect always involves great risk. When two engines are used to haul a train, both drivers are supplied with tickets if another train is following; but if no train is intended to follow, the leading driver has a ticket, and the train driver carries the staff. Bank engines at the rear of trains may have either ticket or staff—if the former, it must go to the end of the section; but if it carries the staff, the driver may return from any point at which his assistance can be dispensed with.

It must be admitted that delays are frequent and unavoidable under this system, especially on long sections of single line; and the actual working of the system, where the trains are numerous, entails, in an unusual degree, watchfulness, clear judgment, and the exercise of that rare quality, quick decision in perplexing circumstances. The appointed crossing places may have to be suddenly altered by telegraphic advice, owing to trains in either direction running late, etc., and every second is of value; and the man with feeble nerves, who hesitates and wavers, will never make a conspicuous mark in this business. The writer was for several years in charge of a station at which the working of about fifty miles was regulated, and by constant practice became thoroughly conversant with every phase of the subject. Delays could often be obviated or minimised by following the movements of trains, their loads, the state of the weather, and other considerations; but notwithstanding every precaution, delays will occur, and it is not a very enviable experience to have a passenger train hung up at a station for ten or fifteen minutes, waiting for a belated ballast or goods train to arrive with the staff; and under such circumstances passengers are apt to indulge in English and other languages not exactly academic or complimentary to the management or oneself. When accidents happen, or engines fail, the staff is frequently sent long distances by hand, and occasionally a horse is hired, or an amateur cyclist is pressed into the service.

Sensational tales, from the writer's personal experience, could be told of staffs mislaid, lost in the darkness, trains going away without staff or ticket, etc.; but these must be left for a more confidential mood.

Advice to Young Signalmen.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Great Northern Railway.*

Experience joined to common sense
To mortals is a Providence.

—GREENE.

HAVING successfully passed through the different classes from fourth to special first, I may be considered qualified to give some sound advice to young signalmen, and those who desire to become such.

No man is a fit candidate unless he has had a few years' experience in some other grade of the service, where he has had opportunities of acquiring some knowledge of the rudiments of train working; even then on such lines as this, where the single needle telegraph has to be thoroughly mastered, it is by no means certain that they would pass the examinations necessary to qualify them for fourth-class signalmen.

The length of time it takes men to pass through the "Practice Rooms," Retford (our training quarters), depends upon their ability to acquire the theory and practice of train signalling. Generally speaking, from four to sixteen weeks is required to educate a man; some learn much quicker than others, especially in cases where they have previously made themselves acquainted with the telegraph alphabet. None but men with sound constitutions should enter the signal department; for the constant worry and confinement has ruined many a sound constitution, and caused men to look prematurely old.

If, after entering this grade of the service, you find your health is likely to suffer in consequence, make a point of looking out for a suitable place in the country, where you have reason to believe you can settle down happy and contented for the rest of your life. Depend upon it, under such circumstances you would last much longer than you would in a busy town or city. But here, let the death rates speak for themselves:—

Here are two county death-rates: Surrey (agricultural) 16.1, Lancashire (manufacturing) 22.5 per 1,000. Six per thousand in favour of the country population. But

we find the death of children in large towns more than double that of those in the country. There are two classes of men that do well in large towns—those who have grown-up families, and those who have none at all. The hardships of those who have eight or nine youngsters to feed, clothe and educate can only be realised by those who have to bring them up in our towns and cities, where everything is dear; rent, coal, and vegetables particularly so. In large towns your hand is always in your pocket; whereas in the country one is able to produce many of his own vegetables and other necessities of daily life. These facts speak for themselves. We will now suppose that you have been transferred from the practice rooms to a fourth-class signal-box.

After you have reported yourself to the stationmaster (a gentleman whom it will pay you to respect), you may procure lodgings. Then I strongly advise you to take particular notice of the outside position of signals, sidings, and things in general. This done, make yourself thorough master of the locking frame, points, lock-bars, and signals; when you can set any of the roads at command, you may proceed to learn the traffic. Having done so, study all the special instructions having any reference to the working of your particular box, and do not fail to adhere strictly thereto on all occasions when you get in charge. Begin by learning everything slowly and surely; one step at a time has always been my motto in such matters. Further, I would urge you to begin your signalman's career by a full determination to act up to the spirit of the rules and regulations, so that you do not lay either yourself or mates open to the eagle eye of the travelling inspector, or other officers who desire to promote discipline among young signalmen. It may not appear to you at all necessary that you should act so strictly as the rules seem to imply, but depend upon it, the man who gives way to loose working at this early stage is in a fair way to get reduced from his position. He is, in fact, courting disaster, which, in one way or another, befalls those who do not cultivate careful habits. You see, it so happens in this particular case you are building up a foundation to support your future character; don't spoil it at its very commencement. I knew two brothers, both signalmen—one almost too strict, the other very much too careless. The former has got on with little trouble, whilst the other was for ever in trouble, and eventually left the line thoroughly disgusted with railway work. The moral is: better be too strict, than not strict enough. Before sending

for the inspector to pass you, satisfy yourself that you know the gradients, the block rules, and special instructions, and ever have fog signals, flags, and lamps at your fingers' ends ; for experience will teach you that a moment's delay in getting them may, in case of emergency, cost you many regrets for want of forethought.

Never risk delay to passenger traffic ; allow ample margin for inferior traffic to safely reach and shunt at the next shunting place. If by chance you do make a blunder, state your case like an honest and truthful man ; for our superiors, with rare exceptions, admire a truthful statement ; it saves endless trouble, and marks you as a man to be trusted. A liar once found out is always branded as such and treated accordingly. Let your motto be :

Onward, onward may we pass
Through the path of duty ;
Virtue is true happiness,
Excellence true beauty.

—MONTGOMERY.

Always work for safety ; your good conduct bonus depends upon it. Besides, you have the lives of many hundreds of human beings in your care—guard them as you do your greatest treasures. To do so you must have all fixed signals working perfectly ; always regulate their working in accordance with the block telegraph instrument governing the line they control. In giving or receiving verbal instruction always have a thorough understanding ; act with coolness and directness of purpose ; think well what you are going to say, and then have your command respected. You are in duty bound to carry out any order which your stationmaster may think well to issue for your guidance. But never do anything contrary to rule, even to oblige that gentleman, without first drawing his attention to the fact. You must also report all cases of irregularity taking place in your sections, so that such evils may be promptly dealt with. As you value your own welfare, so I urge you to protect that of the other men with whom you work.

Friendship, peculiar boon of Heaven,
The noble mind's delight and pride,
To men and angels only given,
To all the lower world denied.

—JONSON.

And if by chance you are single, and perceive the necessity

of a help-mate, try and find one in whom you can trust, and say with the poet:

Give me, instead of beauty's bust,
A tender heart, a loyal mind,
Which with temptation I would trust,
Yet never linked with error find.

Then you may realise what happiness means, and may appreciate Longfellow's lines:

A life of honour and of worth
Has no eternity on earth.

Work and Wealth.

BY A PASSENGER GUARD, *Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.*

LABOUR is often lauded in theory, but seldom honoured in practice, and those who talk so glibly of its dignity generally take care to do as little of it as possible themselves. Yet it is the backbone of the nation; on its sinewy arms rests the whole fabric of society.

Imagine, if you can, that by some miraculous agency all the really useful workers of the nation were some night suddenly disappear. What consternation there would be next day among the dividend mongers, stock and share gamblers, company promoters, lawyers and landowners! With the disappearance of the workers the wealth which these gentlemen manage to obtain by all manner of questionable means would also disappear. The millionaire's millions would be found to consist of nothing more substantial than so many figures printed on cheap paper. The enormous wealth supposed by many to be in the possession of aristocratic families, and to be handed down from one generation to another, would be found to be chiefly composed of legal documents, setting forth their right to certain property which they never use. The self-made man living sumptuously on his means, who has had no scruples in taking advantage of others in order to enrich himself, would suddenly find that he had no means left. Stocks and shares would be worth little more than the paper they are written on, and that most respectable section of the

community, the Stock Exchange gamblers, with those benefactors of mankind who issue enticing prospectuses of companies, three-fourths of which, according to official statistics, are of the bubble order, would find their gentlemanly occupations gone. In fact, all those who profess to be living in independence, many of whom despise their inferiors—their inferiors, of course, being all those who work for their own living, and support them besides—would unexpectedly find they were not as independent as they supposed, and must, perforce, either work or starve. They would have their money? Yes, but in the absence of the wealth produced by the workers, money would be valueless. Besides, as already stated, the riches of the wealthy consist mostly of paper—bonds, securities, etc.—which the labour of the people alone makes valuable; the amount of hard cash actually in the country does not exceed £100,000,000, and less than a thousand persons can legally claim the whole of that sum.

All moonshine, you say! An utterly impossible state of things! Quite so; but it serves to illustrate—what is too often lost sight of amid the complexities of modern life—that this is essentially a working world, and not an idle one. “We must all work or steal, howsoever we may name our stealing,” says Carlyle; and it is harbouring a delusion to suppose that anyone is living on the wealth produced by past generations. We live year by year on what we ourselves create; and the rich are rich simply because they have the legal power to divert to themselves a goodly portion of the wealth that the workers create. The law of Nature is that livelihood follows labour, and nothing could be more explicit than the maxim from the Old Book—“He that will not work, neither let him eat.” Yet we have in this country about a million of adult males in receipt of large incomes, most of whom make no pretence of doing anything useful whatever—useless drones, who, in order that the means by which they live in luxury and ease may not be diminished, compel large numbers of others, anxious to work and support themselves, to live in idleness, poverty, and degradation. The bulk of these social parasites do not so much as lift a finger to aid in producing the wealth they enjoy. They take without giving, claim without earning, consume without producing, living in degrading dependence on the life-long, unremitting toil of others. The capitalist who manages his own business, even though self-aggrandisement be his main object, can at any rate claim to be paid for using his brains; but there!—what service do they render? For what are they

paid?—for being idle. The argument that their “capital” represents them, and works for them, is fallacious. There is no life in capital, except that given to it by living labouring men. The busy hands that manipulate it alone create its value. Neither have they any just claim to be remunerated on the ground of having produced their “capital” by their own individual labour, or by the exercise of their own unaided faculties. “Leave the individual to himself, remove all contributory and co-operative workers, and what is the exact share—the precise value—of each individual’s productive ability? That ability, in the final analysis, consists chiefly in the capacity to push the individual cog into the great social wheel, and get his corn ground in the social mill at society’s cost.”

If, then, no man by his own unaided efforts can become rich, the righteousness of the claims of the wealthy classes are open to very serious doubt. It was labour that gave wealth to the first owner, but these have obtained it through class legislation, by gift, by inheritance, and by capitalising the rent and interest received from the labour of others.

I do not covet their wealth; it is the waste and misuse of it I deplore, and because its possession gives them the power of withholding “the means of livelihood” from those in need, unless their own selfish end can be served; thereby causing want and despairing misery on the one hand, whilst there is a superabundance of the good things of life on the other.

Labour being the source of all wealth, there can be no just basis of social life unless founded upon work—the rendering of service for service; and the terrible evils in our midst—the want, the wretchedness, and shame—will never be remedied so long as an idle class is allowed to waste the wealth that the industrious produce, so long as greedy and unscrupulous sharpers are allowed to enrich themselves at the cost of the national health and prosperity. Not until we, as a nation, recognise that no one can justly claim to participate in the wealth produced by the people unless he has, either by hand or brain, taken part in the labour necessary to produce it, will the people at large have the opportunity of living healthy, happy, human lives.



Block Instruments.

BY A DISTRICT RELIEF MAN, *London and North Western Railway.*

I DON'T suppose any railway company has many more different kinds of block instruments than the L. and N.W.; and why that is so neither I nor a great many more can understand, seeing that they have all different ways in working. What we want, and what our Board of Trade inspectors should insist upon having, is an instrument that will show three positions. In the district that I work we have four kinds. We have what is called "Tyer's One Wire," which works with three plungers, two for the needles and one at the bottom to give the necessary rings on. This instrument is all very well so far as the cheapness comes in, seeing that it only takes one wire from box to box to work it, and the only advantage a signalman has in the working of it is that you cannot place your needle to "Train on Line," or to "Line Clear," without your bell or gong ringing in the box in the rear. This is all very well, but we want it to show the third position. That is to say, a "Be Ready" signal—or "Is Line Clear?" as it is called by some—which is chiefly used by all large companies now. This shows the man in the rear that the signal has been accepted by the man in advance, and should the signalman be busy at the time through shunting, or attending to a passing train, and forget to book it, he very often has to call or telephone his mate, to know if he accepted it. This is where the evil comes in, and a great many signalmen who have never worked any other kind of instrument scarcely know what the third position means; but, thank goodness, these instruments are condemned, according to what I have heard.

The next we have is the "Two Wire" instrument, which is up-to-date at the present time, although an older instrument than the one I have mentioned; but I don't think there is any patent attached to it, as the instruments seem to be telegraph "speaking" instruments converted into block, the needles being larger than a "speaker," and the handle made to peg over to the right or left. Now the normal position of the needle is vertical, or upright, and you have a bell instrument to ring your beats on; so that when the man in advance

accepts your "Be Ready," or "Is Line Clear?" he pegs the handle over to make the needles show "Line Clear." This shows the man in the rear that the signal has been accepted. Next he gives him, say, "Train on Line" signal, or what we call "Train entering section"; the man in advance then pegs it over to the other side to "Train on Line," and when the train passes him all right he gives the man in the rear one ring, and points his needle from "Train on Line" to "Line Clear," and when the man in the rear acknowledges it the needle is left in its normal position—viz., vertical or upright; a very simple and very easy instrument.

Now we come to what is called "Tyers' Patent One-Wire Tell-Tale." This instrument works with a disc with a plunger in the centre of it, to give the rings or beats on, and is adopted for busy yards where permissive block is allowed. This instrument requires a little more knowledge in its working than the other two, as the disc has to be set right before your needles will answer the plunger. First, your needles are standing at their normal position—viz., "Train on Line," or "Line Closed," and your disc must show "Line Closed" as well. Now you get a "Be Ready," or "Is Line Clear?" If you can accept it you push a spring in at the side of your instrument to release your disc, and turn the disc to show "Line Clear," then push your finger in, and it will put your needle from "Train on Line," or "Line Closed," to "Line Clear"; then when you get "Train on Line," you turn your disc again to show "Train on Line," push your plunger in again, and it will put your needle to "Train on Line." After the train passes you reverse your disc to "Line Clear," and push your plunger in to put your needle to "Line Clear," and after you get it acknowledged, put your disc to "Line Closed," and in with the plunger again, and the needle will go to "Train on Line," "Line Closed"—its normal position. Any practical signalman who has never worked one will say, "That seems a queer sort of instrument—the needle pointing to 'Train on Line,' 'Line Closed.' How is the man in the rear to tell, if he happened not to hear the bell ring, when the 'Line Clear' movements were given?" That is where the fault comes in; like the first, you must be there to hear and book it, or you will have to ask, to make sure. For permissive block with this kind of instrument, after you have one train showing "On Line," and you get another, you can keep turning the disc from "Train on Line," and it will show No. 2, and so on up to No. 6, and as each train clears out of the section, you reverse one number until you get the line clear, which clears your instrument to its

normal position, "Train on Line," "Line Closed." You must bear in mind that the man sending the trains into the section has nothing to show him how many trains have been sent on the permissive block, except his bookings.

The fourth and last instrument that I have to deal with is "Tyers' Three-Wire" instrument. This is worked by a disc like the previous one, only it shows three positions, the needle being vertical, or upright, and is worked by turning the disc without a plunger; that is to say, if you accept a "Be Ready," or "Is Line Clear?" you turn the disc to "Line Clear," which puts your needle to the same position. The disc shows the numbers on, the same as the "One-Wire Tell-Tale" for permissive working; but you have a bell instrument to ring your beats on.

"Save us from our Friends!"

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Great Eastern Railway.*

SUCH I can imagine to be the exclamation of many of my fellow-servants on reading the report of the chairman's speech at the recent half-yearly meeting of shareholders of this company—"Save us from our friends!" Lord Claud Hamilton gave a somewhat gloomy account of things, and he attributed many of the difficulties with which the directors were confronted to the "arbitrary interference of the Board of Trade between them (the company) and their men." Nor did his lordship blame the Board of Trade, for he went on to say that "the whole thing was a put-up job between certain trade societies and certain self-advertising M.P.'s and political wire-pullers." The "arbitrary interference" alluded to consisted of the Board of Trade dictating to the company the number of hours their men shall work. "The great body of men," continued Lord Claud, "did not want it or ask for it, but it was forced upon them by their so-called advocates by means which he need not specify."

This is plain language, and Lord Claud will get "hauled over the coals" considerably for giving vent to such expressions, offensive as they must prove to "certain trade societies and certain self-advertising M.P.'s." By reason of the "arbitrary interference" his lordship refers to, the company has had to seriously consider their position, and as a result, retrenchment is the order of the day. Engine-building

is stopped, and orders are given to discharge 450 men from the locomotive constructing sheds. Then the branches are to be taken each one by itself and upon its own merits, with a view to the reduction of expenditure by working each of these lines with a single engine, and thereby dispensing with signalmen, stationmasters, and station staffs. The latter plan of campaign means another batch of unemployed to fraternise with the 450 discharged loco. men. Bad this for the labour world! And here is a great railway magnate telling us that the cause is "arbitrary interference by the Board of Trade," prompted by the aforesaid "certain trade societies and certain self-advertising M.P.'s."

Lord Claud speaks of the great body of the men as not asking or wanting the chances sought by the Board of Trade and its prompters. Is this really so? Speaking with special knowledge of the feeling of the men in a country district, I can honestly say his lordship is perfectly justified in making the remarks he did, and that hundreds of railwaymen cherish one ardent wish in their breasts—namely, that they should be left severely alone by the trade societies and the self-advertising M.P.'s. It is not their wish that there should be this "arbitrary interference" on their account, and they do not hunger and thirst for the advocacy of trade societies or M.P.'s. It is a case with such men, therefore, of "save us from our friends." The M.P.'s no doubt wish to stand well with their constituents, and it is so easy to rail against a railway company. The general public have no special knowledge of railway working, and with the favourite formula, "public safety," it is easy enough to elicit a cheer from an average audience by posing as a champion of shorter hours for railwaymen. Then the Party organ will crack up the "self-advertising M.P." and present him to an admiring world as a "friend of the labour cause," and an "enthusiast for railway safety." So the world wags. But go deeper down and ascertain the real views of the men concerned. Among these you will find a much lower estimate prevailing of the "workers' friend." They do not desire changes brought about by Parliamentary candidates, but prefer to go to the officials themselves when re-adjustment of their duties is wished for. And past experience of this method is sufficient to prove that it is an effective one when a good case is made out. No doubt putting a question to the President of the Board of Trade and receiving a reply gets your vote-hunting M.P. some notoriety, which he and his supporters will know how to turn to good account; but there are plenty of railwaymen for whom this concern is avowedly

manifested who dread the "arbitrary interference" the M.P. is so crazy for. These men feel and know that if their life is not exactly a bed of roses, if they do not enjoy all "beer and skittles," still they have (as things go) much to be thankful for, and they do not want to be always at "daggers drawn" with their employers. They desire to maintain friendly terms with the company, and they dislike the men whose sole aim seems to be to sow dissension between master and man.

No one denies that some of the interference of the Board of Trade in railway matters has done good. By such means, modern appliances calculated to promote safe travelling have been adopted sooner than they would otherwise have been; but when this interference is stretched so far as to compel a company to reduce the hours of its men—irrespective of the men's own wishes and the local circumstances—it seems to be taking a big stride on the road to "grandmotherly legislation." We recognise that our interests are bound up with those of the company; unless the latter prospers, we cannot expect to do so. But if Parliament is not only going to fix the rates for the conveyance of passengers and merchandise, but also to dictate the system of brakes and interlocking gear that shall be used, and insist on certain hours of duty for the railwaymen, it seems to me it would be more honest to take over the railways, and let them be worked by the State for the State. The companies are checked and counter-checked at every turn, and some folk run off with the idea that we (their servants) gloat over the "arbitrary interference." People are too apt to take the loudly-expressed opinions of the trade societies as representing the whole of those for whom they profess to speak, but it must be remembered that the trade unionists on the railway are in a minority, and will probably remain so. What they lack in numbers they make up in noise: but when you have heard all their orators and scribes have to say, do not make too sure that the majority of their fellows would not be ready to exclaim, "Save us from our friends!"



Across Canada: From Vancouver to Winnipeg.

BY A TICKET EXAMINER, *Caledonian Railway.*

DURING a tour in America recently I visited the city of Vancouver, which is situated on the Pacific coast in British Columbia. After seeing the sights of this thriving city of 20,000 inhabitants, which, six or seven years ago, was a mere lumber settlement, I decided to cross the Continent by the Canadian Pacific Railway, familiarly known in Canada as the "C.P.R." I took a ticket for Toronto, and one fine Saturday morning the train steamed out of the station on its long journey to Montreal, a distance of 2,906 miles. Our train—which consists of one powerful engine, one Pullman sleeping-car, one tourist sleeping-car, besides ordinary, emigrant, baggage, and mail cars—travels at a good speed, and we soon leave the coast far behind. The cars are all roomy, and one can walk from one end of the train to the other. The cars are all supplied with stoves; a good dinner is supplied for 75 cents (3s.). In a long journey like this that means that living is expensive, so I had the forethought to get a lunch basket in Vancouver, and cooked my own food on the way across, which was a considerable saving. One thing struck me as being peculiar: the conductor, having no van for his exclusive use, sits in the last car along with the passengers. After leaving Vancouver the scenery is not very interesting until we strike the Frazer River, where occasionally a party of Indians may be seen in their canoes.

In the afternoon we reached North Bend, a divisional point of the railway system, where the company have a fine hotel. The scenery now becomes wilder, and we soon come to the Selkirk range of mountains, where, at a station called "Glacier House," a great glacier is seen—a plateau of gleaming ice extending as far as the eye can reach, which is said to be as large as all the glaciers of Switzerland combined. A short distance from here we pass the summit of the Selkirks, where there is a station called "Selkirk Summit," 4,300 feet above the level of the sea; and from thence we gradually descend till we reach Donald, an important town, and terminus of the western division of the railway.

Leaving Donald, the line follows the Columbia River, and

directly in front are to be seen the great Rocky Mountains, over which our iron steed has to make its way. The scenery from Donald to Field (where the company have another fine hotel) is very fine; ranges of mountains, with snow-covered peaks, towering up on every side. Ten miles further on, Stephens, the station at the summit of the Rockies, is reached, over 5,200 feet above sea level. Banff, the next place of any importance, is the station for Rocky Mountain Park, which is 26 miles long and 10 miles broad. It is a national pleasure ground, the scenery surrounding it being truly magnificent. Leaving Banff, the line continues through the mountains until it strikes the plains, or prairies, near the important town of Calgary, a post of the Hudson Bay Company. The country from here to Medicine Hat, a distance of over 150 miles, is chiefly devoted to cattle ranching, and a few farms are also seen at intervals.

We are now fairly into the North-west Territory of Canada, and we pass in rapid succession the thriving towns of Swift Current, Moosejaw, and Regina, the capital, where the executive council of the various provinces meets. The country from here to Brandon, a railway divisional town, over 200 miles distant, is well-settled, and at some of the villages there are reservations or camps for the Indians.

Leaving Brandon, we rapidly pass through the great province of Manitoba, of which so much is heard in this country. It is, no doubt, a great country for wheat-growing, etc., but the severe winters, in my opinion, discount all its advantages, and persons should think seriously before leaving Britain for this much vaunted province. 130 miles from Brandon, we reach Winnipeg, the capital of Manitoba, with a population of 30,000. It is a handsome city, and has many flour mills, grain elevators, and many notable public buildings. The chief workshops of the Canadian Pacific Railway between Montreal and the Pacific are here, and the train yard contains more than twenty miles of sidings.



Some Curious Traffic on Passenger Trains.

BY A RAILWAY PORTER, *London and South Western Railway.*

ANY person employed at a busy London terminal station in the course of a few years sees some funny objects sent by train; and in spite of the many different rates found specified in the Railway Clearing House Rates and Charges Book, there is every now and again something turning up which cannot be classified, or for which a rate cannot be found which quite meets the needs of the case..

Some years ago a truck arrived at this station containing what looked like a huge lump of putty weighing some tons; but two men had ridden up from the seaport from where it had started with this ugly, mysterious-looking object, and were frequently seen syringing it with salt water, whilst the floor of the truck was thickly strewn with seaweed; and upon a closer examination it was found to be a real live whale, on its way to the Westminster Aquarium, where for a short time it proved a great attraction, but it soon pegged out.

I well remember a nice fright I once got from a beautiful Bengal tiger. It arrived one morning per first train from Southampton in a horse-box, and Mr. Jamrach's agent asked me to go to a butcher's near and get 2s. worth of rough pieces of meat for it.

Of course I complied, and, expecting to find Mr. Tiger properly caged, I got into the attendant's compartment, and opened the manger door to drop the meat over, when, to my horror, I saw the striped beauty calmly reposing on the straw on the floor, apparently quite at liberty. The rattle I made disturbed him, and he gave a growl of resentment at my intrusion. This was quite enough for me. I slammed the door and bolted, almost fancying Mr. Tiger was at my heels; only to find his custodian laughing on the platform, for it appeared that, after all, he was properly secured, and could not reach me.

I had a nearer shave than that, by a long way, once, through my inquisitiveness. A large upright case had been put out of a Southampton train, and stood on the platform for some time, and I must needs peep through one of a number of holes which were bored near the top. Bang came something

unpleasantly close to my eye, and it actually caught the lashes. It turned out the case contained a live ostrich *en route* to the Zoo', and on seeing my eye so temptingly close, had gone for it.

Everybody knows that horses are carried by passenger trains every day, but it does not so often happen that they are put into the guard's van, and, what is still more rare, the stable in which that horse lives daily and sleeps nightly brought to the station and put into the guard's van with the horse in it; but it was done here about twelve months ago. The horse, a small one, used for theatrical purposes, was bodily lifted into the van inside his own stable, and made the journey in that way.

Only the week before last a man walked his horse around the station platform, led it to the main line cloak-room window, and asked for a ticket for it, as he wished to leave it while he went out into the town. One of the cruellest acts I have seen committed on a dumb creature was on a poor baby seal, one Saturday night. It had been caught on the Suffolk coast that morning, brought up the G.E.R. line, and across London to Waterloo, for Portsmouth, but the last train was gone. The poor brute was put in its dry box into the hot cloak-room, and left there till 8.30 the next morning; and when the half-human little thing was placed under the tap in the yard, before putting it into the train, it cried like a child. Just fancy the poor thing being taken from the sea and kept for about twenty-four hours in a hot, dry place, and no water given to it! I should like to have seen the person who had it in charge thrown into the North Sea, from whence the seal had been taken, and compelled to stay there twenty-four hours. It would have taught him a lesson in kindness to dumb creatures.

Considerable cruelty is practised upon the turtle before it is turned into soup and served to tighten the aldermanic waistcoat.

From the time they are caught till landed in London is about six weeks, and the poor brutes have all that time to lie upon their backs alive, nailed down to the decks by a fin, with a swab under their heads. They are brought from the ships at Southampton to Waterloo in wagons in a quantity of straw, and in very cold weather hot water cans are put into the wagons to keep them warm. Some of them are very large and heavy, weighing from 2 to 3 cwt., and when they are taken out of the wagons and laid in rows ready for removal on the platform, fifty of them at a time, they are a great centre of attraction to the gathering crowd.

Plenty has been written as to the horrors of the Atlantic cattle trade, not without reason; but if that is cruel, the transport of turtle is barbarously cruel! But, there, poor people don't eat turtle!

At a certain junction station down the South Western system it's not safe to say, "Tie him on behind," if a certain hoary-headed porter is near you or within hearing. It appears that some years back, on joining the service, he was told to take a calf to the guard's van of a certain train. He did so, and asked the guard where he was to put it. The guard being busy, said, testily, "Oh, tie him on behind," and thought no more about it. At the next station, on going to see if all was right behind, he found a piece of rope, with a calf's head attached, dangling there, and the back of the van smothered with blood, etc. Comment is needless—the green porter had taken him at his word.

Substance and Shadow.

BY A PASSENGER GUARD, *London and North Western Railway.*

IN the railway service, as in many other occupations, there are to be found numerous individuals who are discontented with their present position in life, however good it may be, and who willingly sacrifice it on purpose to follow in the track of gilded fortune, which, with a will-of-the-wisp's brightness and uncertainty, often lures them on to their own social and moral detriment. Railwaymen can usually depend on having regular employment found them, so long as they obey the rules and regulations set apart for their guidance, and, generally speaking, conduct themselves respectably when off duty. Under present circumstances, the possibility of railway companies becoming bankrupt is very slight indeed, and such being the case, they offer better prospects of constant work than those private firms whose financial foundations are not so securely set.

It is true the wages which they pay for work done will not enable the majority of railway workers to provide for the proverbial rainy day; but then the great desideratum in these struggling times is a regular occupation which will keep the wolf from the door and prevent any further

addition to the already crowded ranks of the poverty-stricken.

It is preferable, I think, that a man should work regularly throughout the year, at a moderate wage on which he can live comfortably, than that he should be employed for a few months only at a higher wage which allows him to live rather more luxuriously for the time being, but which does not hinder him and his family from experiencing the bitter pangs of hunger during the period of his inactivity.

I have no desire whatever to blazon forth the railway service as a model one in this respect. It is far from being so, for there is too little of the milk of human kindness expended in the management of the flesh and blood workers, who create the dividends for it, to be an ideal one from a labour point of view. At the present time it is not saying much for the perspicacity of the railwayman who wilfully throws himself out of work because he sees a possible chance of a more gentlemanly occupation than the one he is at present filling. Even if it offers exceptional advantages in the shape of increased emoluments, and he should be fortunate enough to secure it, it will prove the reverse of being beneficial to him if after the lapse of a few months the concern (brilliant as its opening was) goes to the dogs, leaving him to trust to the tender mercies of the world for the support of his family. To do justice to himself, and to those dependent on the fruits of his labour, he should, in the first place, become thoroughly conversant with the *bona-fides* of any "mushroom" firm which presents such glaring inducements to attract competent men. It is only done for the purpose of enabling them to carry on their business successfully before the town in which they have opened becomes, in a manner, too hot to hold them with any degree of comfort to themselves. They are thus forced to sever all connections made, so that they can evade the hands of justice, and by flitting to pastures new still carry on their nefarious operations, leaving their dupes in the meanwhile to do the best they can.

Those genuine, sincere offices, where very little work of any description is done, and where good salaries are paid for doing it, are very few and far between nowadays, and, what is more, their whereabouts is not extensively advertised, thus keeping them in the hands of a favoured few, and preventing the keen competition which would otherwise follow.

I have known men who have resigned their positions under a railway company to take up work for some comparatively unknown firm, whose introduction to the commercial

world has been, figuratively speaking, advertised by the blaring sound of trumpet and drum. These men have left the railway drudgery, as they termed it, for ever, and their future prospects, so glowingly painted, have been the envy of their late co-workers; but, sad to say, in one short year, or perhaps less, they have been left stranded, to walk the streets with the dread cry, "Out of work," ringing in their ears, while the magnificent firm has melted away as if by magic.

Looking at the matter in this light, it seems advisable that all railwaymen who purpose improving their condition in life should look well before taking any irrevocable step which might land them in a very slough of despondency. The wisdom of the old saw, "All is not gold that glitters," is still strikingly apparent, and we should individually bear it in mind whenever we feel tempted by outside show to stretch forth our hands to seize the gaudy tinsel, for in doing so we might grasp the shadow and let fall for ever the substance, which had hitherto enabled us to live.

The Compensations of Life.

BY A DISTRICT AUDITOR, *North Eastern Railway, Thirsk.*

THE object of this paper is to show that, notwithstanding the partial distribution of what are called the gifts of fortune, the goods and ills of life are more evenly divided than we are sometimes apt to imagine.

A short time since an invalid arrived at a Yorkshire railway station. This station bears the name of a well-known health resort. The stationmaster went at once to the assistance of the infirm man, and helped him to the carriage waiting for him outside the station. The gentleman expressed his thanks, and then said, "Stationmaster, I am a wealthy man. I say this not in the way of boasting. I could sign a cheque, which would be honoured, for £100,000; and I would gladly do this if by doing so I could secure your vigorous body and cheerful countenance."

When the stationmaster related the incident to me I said, "That is where the doctrine of compensation comes in. If you haven't got wealth, you have got something else. You with your good health and moderate income, are far richer than that poor individual with his countless thousands."

A well-known divine tells us that on one occasion when enjoying his holiday vacation he was rambling on the sea-coast in a remote part of England. He there saw a richly-furnished boat pulled into a small bay. That boat contained a stunted cripple, whose every limb was useless. It was the nobleman who owned half the county—the lord of all that princely fortune and estate. The divine then asks, “Were it not better to be the poorest fisher-lad sailing out strong and hearty to earn his scanty fare, than to be that poor crippled lord with money that he couldn’t use, and wide estates that he had never seen?”

The late Prince Bismarck is reported to have said that he would rather find a cure for rheumatism than possess all the titles of Europe. There is a very touching story told respecting the late President Garfield. A short time before his cruel murder he had an interview with his elder brother, Thomas, who occupied a small farm. As they were about to separate the President said: “Thomas, you are going back to your peaceful home, while I must encounter trouble and increasing anxiety.”

There is a profound meaning in the old fable: Jupiter bids all mankind lay their burdens in a heap, and then each one is allowed to choose out of the mass of suffering any one which he may prefer to his own. But this is the result: The sufferer selects the new burden, but, being strange to his shoulders, it galls and oppresses him more than the old one, so that at last, in despair, he prays Jupiter to give him back his old grievance and relieve him of a weightier woe.

After all that can be said about the advantages of one man over another, there is a remarkable equality in human fortunes. If one man has cash, the other has brains. If one boasts of his income, the other can boast of his influence. There is no one so miserable but that his neighbour wants something that he possesses, and no one is so mighty but that he wants another’s aid.

This wonderful system of compensation runs through everything. Nature abounds in illustrations of this truth. The sun that rises in clouds may set in splendour, and that which rises in splendour may set in gloom. In olden time the tribe of Asher had its rocky portion, but iron shoes were given for the rough and stony path. Marah’s waters were bitter, but close beside the fountain grew the tree to sweeten them.

Disadvantages of one kind are balanced by advantages of another kind. Night draws on with its darkness, but the stars flash out, and they are a rich compensation for the darkness.

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A genial writer says: "Some people find fault with Nature for putting thorns on rose trees; I always thank her for putting roses on thorns." This shows the importance of looking at the compensations as well as the discomforts and inconveniences in nature. It is in human life that this law of compensation extensively prevails. The poor boy who has to work hard, and who has not the comforts or good times that the rich man's son has, gets blessing in the rugged health, the habits of work, the manliness and self-reliance which come to him out of his toil and tasks and hardships.

The working-man weary with his work has compensation in his relish for food, and in the soundness of his sleep. The poor man may have fewer comforts and more privations, but he has none of the rich man's cares and anxieties. Lowly places may be less conspicuous, and less honour may be attached to them, but there is less responsibility.

We may complain about our lot, but this lot may be rendered tolerable and even pleasant by the chain of compensation which encircles the whole and links every drawback with a corresponding advantage.

Every ill has somewhere a good to balance it. There is never an inconvenience in life without its compensating benefit, if we have only faith and patience to find it. Much depends upon our point of view in looking at life's experiences and inconveniences.

One bitter night, during the American War, President Lincoln and a friend were looking out at the driving storm. The friend remarked on the hardships the soldiers must endure on such a night. The President replied that there was not a soldier in the camp with whom he would not gladly exchange places. In individual experience the same law prevails. Life is a chequered scene. Good and evil, happiness and misery, pleasure and pain, are interlaced with tangled skeins, and no efforts of man can wholly unravel them.

Pain may be hard to bear, but it has its compensations.

As singing after silence is,
Or sun is after rain,
So may the lessons be that tell
The blessedness of pain.

A great writer says: "A fever, a mutilation, a cruel disappointment, a loss of wealth, a loss of friends, seems at the time unpaid loss, and unpayable. But the sure years reveal the deep remedial force that underlies all facts." Bitter sorrow may visit us, but there is always a bright side to it. We shudder at its approach, but we pass under its shadow, and comforts appear which we had not noticed before.

George Macdonald speaks about the unseen compensations of life. "When ruin threatens there is the bracing of the nerves. When pain prevails there is the sudden abatement which is paradise to the tortured."

Out of evil cometh good,
Joy is born of sorrow.
Griefs that rend the heart to-day
Die in bliss to-morrow.

This law is strikingly seen in the case of those who have been deprived of some of the senses. Blindness is alleviated by the almost supernatural power that is given to the other senses. The late Mr. Fawcett, speaking of blindness, said: "Those only know who have felt it by their own experience the wonderful compensating forces which Nature supplies."

There is compensation in every life. The cup we have to drink may be bitter, but there are some drops of cordial in it. There is no darkness so deep as not to have something to brighten it. There is no difficulty without some corresponding impulse or advantage. Advantages and disadvantages go together.

No shadow, but its sister light
Not far away must burn;
No weary night, but morning light
Shall follow in its turn.

In this subject there is a lesson to be learned by those who are called successful—the winners of the world's prizes. They must not be exalted above measure. There must be no boasting, for connected with every position there is some drawback. "All is not gold that glitters." "In every joy there is a pain, in every rose a thorn." This is brought before us by a Roman poet in one of his fables.

A stag admires his branching horns and finds fault with his feet. When he is pursued by the hunters his feet enable him to escape, but he is afterwards entangled in a thicket by his horns, of which he was so proud, and torn to pieces by the hounds. Our success in life may be a source of danger, and if not, there is in connection with it always something lacking. The great lesson is that of contentment with the allotments of life. The theory of compensation is a philosophy of consolation, and it is this aspect of it that interests and impresses us. Many are inclined to find fault with the gifts that have fallen to their share, and would gladly exchange them for others.

Madame de Stael bitterly regretted that she was not

beautiful, and would gladly have bartered away her intellect for the gift of beauty; while in her own circle beautiful ladies envied the power she wielded through her charms of mind. And thus it has always been. Some would change their circumstances, thinking that if things were otherwise all the happiness they covet would fall into their lap.

Possibly the circumstances in which we are placed are the best for us. Perhaps in no other could the beautiful mosaic of our lives be so exquisitely finished; in no other could we find ourselves so much at home. We are not going to murmur because we cannot write poetry like John Milton, or sculpture marble like Michael Angelo, or paint like Raphael. We will not complain because others hold higher positions than ourselves. The thing is not so bad as it seems. We will not dwell on what we have not, but rather on what we have. We have only little, but we might have had less.

Out of black night bloomed a flower,
Clear as a star and fair as the day;
In the sorrowful soil of one desolate hour
The germ of unspeakable gladness lay.



Chronic Grumblers.

BY A PASSENGER GUARD, *London and North Western Railway.*

THE railwayman who works out his weal on the busy platform of one of our huge stations will doubtless find it an extremely difficult matter to count on the fingers of both his hands the number of grumbling individuals, whose lives seem to be spent in one perpetual round of fault-finding, and who, while engaged in this questionable form of amusement, persistently pester him with an aggravating recital of grievances which, for the most part, exist only in their own diseased imaginations. That the majority of them may be safely classed under the above heading is indisputable; but whether such a result is entirely owing to the dyspeptic troubles, and a consequently jaundiced view of the general conditions of life, or whether they were born that way and cannot help it, is not for me to judge.

In the ten or twelve hours which at present constitute the average railwayman's working day he certainly derives a considerable amount of healthy pleasure from the nature of his occupation—the continual panorama of fresh faces and events which crowd thick and fast before his keen and observant eyes.

This pleasure, however, is largely diluted by the advent of the aforesaid cross-grained grumblers, who evidently imagine that the vaulted roof of the railway station covers a suitable spot on which they can display their misdirected talents in this respect. I am afraid that in a great many cases they pour their manifold woes into unsympathising ears, for the bustling railwayman has neither the time nor the inclination to increase the harass of his already trying duties by becoming an interested listener.

We can all agree with the man who has a good hearty fit of grumbling when things seem to be going all wrong out of sheer "cussedness"; but we cannot appreciate the efforts of the discontented individual who grumbles when everything is going on all right, simply for the sake of growling at something or other, and whose sole mission in life appears to be the creation of discord where none exists.

Amongst the numerous complaints which are daily preferred against the various railway companies for doing those

things which they ought not to have done, and leaving undone those things which they ought to have done, there are some that are so utterly frivolous as to plainly portray the nature of the man who makes them, and the purpose for which they are made. How ridiculous it seems to a practical railway-man to hear these rank outsiders, with their parrot cry of what they would do if they had the arranging of the traffic; for then there would be no hitch of any description, and all the trains would fit in at the different junctions with the exactness of a neat, well-fitting glove.

If those officials who have spent a lifetime in drawing out time-tables, and in making arrangements for the smooth running of the traffic, cannot do so without a slight failure now and again, it stands to reason that men who know nothing whatever of the intricacies of railway work would be bound to make some glaring and hopeless blunders, even if they attempted the simplest details. Instead of their facilitating in any way the present working of trains, they would be more likely to become inextricably mixed amongst the varied complications of the business, and by so doing duly qualify themselves for the nearest asylum.

Some time ago one of these cranky persons wanted to know, through the medium of the Press, why the railway companies could not paint their carriages a distinctive colour, according to the class of the vehicle; so that when thirsty travellers made a rush from the refreshment-rooms they might find their proper places without any trouble whatever.

Apparently this astute and observant individual forgot the fact that in many cases each vehicle contains the three classes—1st, 2nd, and 3rd—and to paint them in three different colours would be to make a train composed of such vehicles appear to the ordinary observer a ludicrous and somewhat startling combination. What is more, I do not think for a moment that such an innovation would assist in any way the class of individual to which the proposer of such a monstrosity evidently belongs; for they would invariably forget on their return from the refreshment-rooms what colour the carriage was painted which they had left but a few minutes before.

In this way they blame the railway authorities for what is really their own want of method in going about; for if, instead of rushing aimlessly hither and thither, they would use the eyes and ears with which a beneficent Creator has gifted them, they would find them of more genuine use than in allowing that unruly member—the tongue—too much scope.

It has been said that we are a nation of grumblers, and

the right of grumbling is claimed as a British birthright ; but be this as it may, my opinion is that if the most pronounced of these rabid grumblers were to be placed in the positions at present held by the higher railway officials, they would prove more rigorous taskmasters to their employés, and would be more chary of granting concessions to the travelling public, than those who now wield the power. They are like the spoilt child who spends his waking hours in crying for some plaything which is out of his reach, and who, having gained it, is in no wise satisfied, but throws it from him and loudly clamours for something else.

The fact of the matter is, their grumbling propensities are not roused so much by what they think is lacking in our railway arrangements, but it is rather the result of their own unsettled dispositions ; for when they receive what they have asked for, they will inevitably grumble, either at the mode of giving, or at the favour itself as not being exactly the thing they wanted. We are sometimes inclined to doubt the wisdom of the old saying which tells us that everything comes to him that waits ; but the chronic grumblers, and those public servants who have suffered a terrible martyrdom at their hands, will most certainly prove its truth, for they will in due course find in the long, deep sleep of death that mental rest which has been denied to them while living.



Our Pension Fund.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Great Eastern Railway.*

THE advantages and disadvantages of the railway service are often discussed, and varied are the conclusions arrived at. In this article I purpose dealing with one of the advantages—at least, in my estimation—of the system I belong to, namely, the provision of a Pension Fund for the regular servants of the company who are precluded from joining the Superannuation Fund.

The subject of old age pensions is a standing dish with politicians of all parties. Very few of the latter-day election addresses can be produced which do not contain reference to this subject. Aspirants for Parliamentary honours belonging to every political school, one and all, profess their desire to establish some sort of State Pension system. We hear of various schemes being discussed, but yet somehow the solution of the question does not seem to get “a bit forrader.”

However, whilst legislators and political orators have been talking, the G.E. and other railway companies have been working, and the result is we have now a Pension Fund on this line, which was established March 16th, 1891, and possessing a balance to its credit at the bankers on December 31st, 1894, of no less than £62,272 18s. 9d. At the end of last year there were 4,828 contributing members, and two others who have commenced drawing their pension. During the four years of the Fund's existence the members have contributed the sum of £29,850 15s. 10d., and the company have contributed (according to agreement) an equal amount, besides paying in the shape of interest for the same period £4,141 4s. 4d. There has been paid to members leaving the service during that time the sum of £695 10s. 3d., and to the relatives or representatives of deceased members £85 15s. 8d. For pensions £18 11s. 4d. has been paid, making a total on the expenditure side of £1,569 17s. 3d., and at the recent annual meeting of delegates elected to represent the members the Chairman of the Managing Committee stated that if every member of the Fund had died at the end of last year there would still have remained to the credit of the Fund a balance of £695 3s. 3d., so he thought they might congratulate themselves on their solvent condition.

At a former meeting the request had been made that the Company should make further provision for those who wished to insure for higher amounts than £25 a year, and a promise was held out to consider the request. As a result the Chairman of the Company was able to announce that a Pension Supplemental Fund will—providing the Company's Bill receive Parliamentary sanction, and the assent of the shareholders is obtained—be brought into operation as from the 1st July in this year. Two months will be given to those entitled to join on the higher scale to lodge their applications with the Secretary, and after the two months have expired no further applications will be entertained except from those promoted from minor positions to higher rated posts. The Chairman endeavoured to make this point particularly clear to the delegates, and certainly those who halt between two opinions about joining the Supplemental Fund had need to make up their minds before the two months expire, or the chance will pass them by. However, only those in receipt of 25s. a week salary are eligible to join the higher scale, and this cuts out all country signalmen whose tip-top price for six days' manipulation of levers and block instruments is 24s., and I presume they are not allowed to count the seventh day extra pay as entitling them to go up higher.

That "delays are dangerous" in these matters may be easily proved by entering into confab with our men. Scores, nay, hundreds, perhaps thousands, neglected the opportunity of joining the Fund on its formation, and many of them have been sorry ever since. They would gladly become members of the Fund now, but it is too late, the door is shut. They had the same chance to join as the present members, every explanation was given, the time at first fixed for closing the list of members was extended for the benefit of the laggards, but all to no purpose. They could not, or would not, see that it was to their interest to join and make a little sacrifice for old age, and now many of them devoutly wish they had.

Why did they hang fire? For various reasons. Some seem to be naturally improvident, and others got it into their heads that the Company was merely weaving a web to trap their servants. It was contended that we should be entirely at the Company's mercy if once we enrolled our names on the Pension Fund membership list, and then woe betide us. We should be debarred from indulging in the luxury of a strike, and there were those who represented that the chief object the Company had in view was to get the men completely under their sway. We were told that to join such a Fund as this was to "contract out" of the privileges supposed to follow

in the wake of trade combinations. And there were others who talked as if the Company was going to make a good thing out of our contributions and had an ulterior motive in establishing the Society.

For my part I fail to see how any man can go far wrong in joining such a fund as this, and it is quite conceivable that the time may come when many of us will have cause to bless the day we became attached to it. In some way or other the money we invest in the Society is bound to return to us, or our representatives. If we leave the service the whole amount of our contributions is returned, together with the accumulated interest from the time we joined. If we die in the service all we have ever paid in is returned to our next-of-kin with an equal amount added by the Company. And if we should live to retire from the service and be able to draw our weekly pension, we shall be very pleased that in our younger days we made this provision for old age and infirmity. Our income will not be large, but it will be regular; and if the necessities of life are then as cheap as they are to-day, we shall always manage to snap our finger at the cursed workhouse. A pension which we can demand as a right, and for which we have paid, is far and away better than all the State pampering. But still if in the sweet by-and-bye the State cares to supplement our pension with something on its own account, we shall no doubt be able to find a use for it.



Interchange Privilege Season Tickets.

BY A CLERK, *Midland Railway.*

THE concessions by the various railways of the quarter-fare to all classes of their servants is, undoubtedly, a very great boon. The uniform staff, by whom the agitation was commenced and carried on, are to be congratulated upon the grand success of the movement. Silly and unscrupulous individuals, of whom there will always be a certain percentage upon every railway, will, it is to be feared, occasionally yield to the temptation to swindle, and thereby endanger the privileges of their fellow-servants.

Such men have only themselves to blame when, upon detection, they are expelled from the service, to which they are a disgrace. In the general interest of the service, it is to be hoped that the sharp and swift punishment which has already fallen upon some of these black sheep will serve, like the crows which farmers nail to the doors of their barns, *pour encourager les autres*.

The clerical staff will benefit largely by this generous concession, but the boon, although most welcome, does not mean quite so much to us as it does to our fellow-servants, the uniform staff, as all clerks except juniors have long enjoyed the advantage of free passes upon foreign lines.

I am rather afraid the suggestion I am about to make with regard to the extension of the quarter-fare privilege to holders of season tickets may lead some to remark, "Give a railwayman an inch, and he'll clamour for an ell"; but despite objections of this carping nature, I will state what I venture to think might very well be done to increase the comfort of the clerical staff at very little expense.

As many of your readers will be aware, a petition was got up not long ago by the clerical staff of the Mid. Rwy. Co. in London, asking our directors to grant us free residential passes within a certain radius of the Metropolis, which privilege has long been enjoyed by the staff of the Great Eastern Company. I should be very sorry to say anything likely to endanger the chance of a successful issue to that agitation, but the reply which the deputation received from the management, although courteous and considerate, seemed to leave little ground for hope that we shall be able to ride perfectly free when journeying to and from business.

That being the case, it may be good policy to act on the maxim, "Half a loaf is better than none," and now that there has been what may be called a "shake hands all round" over the success of the privilege ticket movement, a boon, as I have pointed out, which chiefly benefits the uniform staff, perhaps the gentlemen who direct the internal economy of our various lines will consider the advisability of extending the quarter-fare privilege to clerks holding season tickets upon foreign lines.

It is, I believe, the practice upon most railways to grant season tickets at quarter-fare to their own clerks, but to charge half-fare to the servants of other companies.

This rule bears very hardly upon clerks who happen to be employed or to live in a locality not served by their own company's trains.

There are hundreds of clerks in London, and doubtless many in other large towns, employed in receiving offices and depôts remote from their own company's passenger station, but close to a station, or it may be several stations, belonging to other companies. These clerks, most of them men with very small salaries, cannot avail themselves of the adjacent stations unless they are prepared to pay double the amount charged by their own companies. Take, for example, the whole of that very great portion of London which lies south of the Thames.

The Great Northern, Great Western, North Western, and Midland lines all have their passenger termini north of the Thames, but all have large goods depôts in South London, at which are employed scores of clerks, all of whom are compelled, if they wish to take advantage of the quarter-fare privilege on their own systems, to walk a distance of about a mile. Do I hear some country cousin say, "But surely that is no great distance, and, in fact, ought to afford a Cockney a little much-needed exercise"?

Of course no one would make that remark if he had ever travelled over the route, but, for the information of those who have not, I may say that it includes the crossing of London Bridge and the busiest thoroughfares of the City at times when they are most densely crowded. In fact, every inch of the way is through masses of people all hurrying both morning and evening—on the Bridge and Surrey side, at any rate—in the opposite direction to the unfortunate railway clerk, whose journey, or, more accurately speaking, "struggle," occupies nearly half an hour, and, needless to say, takes a great deal out of those who are at all advanced in years, or weakly.

All this needless waste of time and strength might surely be spared, seeing that close to the offices where these clerks work are the stations of no less than three of the southern lines, most convenient all of them, but under present circumstances virtually prohibited.

Broadly speaking, clerks who reside in the suburbs must pay about a shilling a week extra for the privilege of travelling on any other line than their own.

When that tax cannot be afforded it means a lot of additional walking, and needless fatigue and loss of time in getting to business, and in returning home.

I must not omit to point out that in addition to the extra charges for season tickets on foreign lines, clerks are required by many of the companies to "plank down" the sum of 10s., and in no case less than 5s., as a deposit.

This is doubtless a needful precaution to prevent fraud by the unscrupulous among the general body of the travelling public; but it is surely not requisite in the case of railway clerks, a body of men who, with very rare exceptions, have far too much at stake on the railway to attempt the paltry fraud of travelling with an expired season ticket.



Spagnoletti's Electric Locking.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Metropolitan Railway.*

A SHORT time ago there appeared an article on the above subject; but I feel, nevertheless, that some further explanation and remarks will be acceptable to many readers, especially those who are signalmen.

In the first place, let us keep in view three signal boxes, which I will call A, B, and C respectively.

When a train arrives at A the signalman must offer the train to B (that is if the signalling instrument is showing "line clear") by giving a certain number of beats on the train bell, according to the description of the train, and by unpegging the white disc of the signalling instrument, upon which B presses a red disc attached to his instrument, which releases the lock that controls the starting signal at A, so that the train may leave the station and enter the section at B. The lock just mentioned is connected with the catch rod of the lever in such a manner that it is impossible for the signalman to lift the catch rod out of the slot, and thereby to pull the lever over, until the signalman in advance has released the lock.

On the train arriving at B the signalman there repeats in the same manner the operation described above to the signalman at C. When the whole of the train has passed B's starting signal the engine runs over a treadle placed beneath one of the rails, and releases the signalling instrument which had been showing "train on line" since the train had started from A.

As soon as B sees that the instrument is released he puts his starting signal back, and gives three beats on the bell to A, to signify that the line is clear, in answer to which A presses the white disc and pegs the instrument to "line clear," and then, of course, A can offer another train to B in the same way as before.

If the signalman at B happened to forget to put his starting signal back when the train had left the station, or even if, when putting it back, he should, without noticing it, only push the lever a certain distance and not quite back, it would be possible for him to accept another train by releasing the lock at A, owing to the electric circuit being broken. for when the signalman puts the lever back it becomes locked again, and until then the electric circuit is incomplete.

It will thus be seen that additional safety is secured, for if it were possible to accept a second train from A without the starting signal at B being locked again, the signalman could not, in a moment of forgetfulness, either by leaving the signal off or by pulling the lever again, as the case might be, allow the second train to go on to C without having first obtained permission to let the train start away; and if it should happen that the first train had not left C before the second train had arrived there, it is very likely that a more or less serious collision would be the result.

If B should attempt to release the starting signal at A under the above circumstances, the result would be that instead of the lock "coming off," as it is termed, B would be locked up himself, and he would then be obliged to seek the assistance of the inspector, who has charge of a key by which the instrument can be released. At some stations there are two sections in each direction, worked from one signal box, in which case additional instruments are required, so that when the signalman has accepted a train into the first section, which is as far as the home signal, he presses the disc of the additional instrument and thus releases the lock of the home signal, which can then be lowered and the train allowed to enter the station.

After the engine has passed the home signal, and as it enters the station, it passes over a treadle, which releases the instrument controlling the first section, and then the signalman can accept another train when he has placed the home signal to danger, and as soon as the first train has left the station the additional instrument is released, and then when he has put the starting signal back he can allow the second train to enter the station by simply pressing the disc of the additional instrument, and thus releasing his home signal again.

In some cases the additional section is in advance of the station—that is, between the starting and the advance signals; but the principle of working the two sections is the same. When a train arrives the signalman releases his own starting signal by the additional instrument, but the advance signal is released by the signalman in advance.

At junction cabins the instruments are naturally much more complicated, both in their internal structure and in the working of them, the signalman in some cases being unable to accept a train from the branch at the same time as he has accepted one from the main line, that is, with trains running in the same direction. When the first train has passed the junction, the branch train may then be permitted

to approach, and, of course, the same rule applies to a main line train while a branch train is signalled.

There are other ways also in which the actions of signalmen in junction cabins are controlled by the electric locking, but which would necessarily be much too technical and complicated to be described here.

At some of the country and suburban stations arrangements are made by which local trains may be sent back to their starting point. At these stations it is, of course, necessary that there should be two crossover roads, one at each end of the station. For these arrangements additional instruments and treadles are brought into use, as even the shunting is controlled by the electric locking. On the arrival of the down train the shunter uncouples the engine, which then runs out of the station, so far as to stand clear of the crossing; then, if the signalling instrument for the top line is showing "line clear" the signalman can press the disc of the additional instrument and so release the lock of the shunting signal for the engine to cross from the down to the up line. The engine then runs through the station and clear of the second crossing, upon which the signalman sets the points of the crossing and pulls off another signal to allow the engine to cross from the up to the down line, so that it may be coupled to the train again.

The signalman must not put the last mentioned signal back until the additional instrument has been released by the engine passing over a treadle placed within the crossing for that purpose. This instrument being released signifies that the up line is clear, and that the signalman may now accept a train for the up line if required; for while this instrument is showing "train on line" the electric circuit of the signalling instrument for the up line is, to use a technical term, "cut out," so that it is impossible to accept a train until the additional instrument is showing "line clear."

In order that trains may start back from the same platform at which they arrive, another starting signal is placed at the end of the platform. This signal is called "up start from down road," or *vice versâ*, as the case might be.

The lock of this signal is released at the same time as that of the upstarting signal, and when one signal is pulled off the lock of the other goes on immediately, so that it cannot be pulled off till it has been again released.

When the train is ready to start the signalman sets the crossing for the train to cross to the up line. He then gives the train on to the signalman in advance, and as soon as the lock is released he lowers the signal for the train to cross.

When the train has cleared the station the engine passes over an additional treadle, and the down signalling instrument is released, which till then had been showing "train on line," so that another down train may now be accepted.

The electric locking may also be used at stations where there are sidings in connection with the signals which have control of them.

It may also be used at terminal stations in a somewhat similar manner to that described above.

In conclusion, I should like to add a few remarks as to the particular merits of this electric locking. It will be seen that it is a reliable means by which the safety of passengers and the protection of signalmen are secured. When I say "reliable," I do not mean to say that signalmen should absolutely rely upon the action of the locking. That is not the purpose for which it is used. It is simply used in order to check them in any error of judgment that they may be liable to fall into, and they should act in precisely the same manner as if there were no locking whatever for their protection. It would be absurd to say that this or any other kind of locking was perfect and absolutely reliable, as such a thing is utterly impossible.

The Metropolitan signalmen greatly appreciate this valuable aid and protection, and I firmly believe that not one of them would agree to have it taken away. It is comparatively very simple in its working, and it is my opinion that although other kinds of locking may possibly be equal to none can excel Spagnoletti's Electric Locking.



The Evils of Monopoly.

BY A PASSENGER GUARD, *Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.*

TO us of the nineteenth century it seems hardly credible that "during the latter part of the fifteenth century fifteen weeks' work enabled the labourer to abundantly provision himself and family for twelve months."

Since that time man's ingenuity has enabled us to almost conquer nature, has brought to our aid many marvellous forces undreamt of in those days, and increased our wealth-producing power enormously. Yet I question whether the average working man, aided as he is by machinery and modern scientific appliances, and working, not four months in the year, but week in week out all the year round, is in as good a position as regards the indispensable necessities of life as was the free labourer 500 years ago. Speaking at the Industrial Remuneration Conference in 1886, Mr. Frederic Harrison said: "To me, at least, it would be enough to condemn modern society as hardly an advance on slavery or serfdom, if the permanent condition of industry were to be that which we behold; that 90 per cent. of the actual producers of wealth have no home that they can call their own beyond the end of a week, have no bit of soil, or so much as a roof that belongs to them; have nothing of value of any kind except as much old furniture as will go in a cart; have the precarious chance of weekly wages which barely suffice to keep them in health; are housed for the most part in places that no man thinks fit for his horse; are separated by so narrow a margin of destitution that a month of bad trade, sickness, or unexpected loss brings them face to face with hunger or pauperism. This is the normal state of the average workman in town or country."

If this be true—and no stronger proof of its accuracy could be adduced that the recent destitution throughout the country—it does not say much for our vaunted nineteenth century civilisation.

But our purpose is to try and ascertain why the industrial classes, with all the advantages they are said to enjoy, should occupy such a degraded position. Why should the average workman be able to obtain only a precarious living by means of weekly wages? Why should many willing workers be

unable to earn any living at all, and be condemned, in many cases, to an existence more degraded than that of brutes?

The answer is—monopoly. A minority of the community, by artificial regulations and laws made by themselves in their own interest, have obtained possession of the land, the raw material and tools of the nation, without which the people cannot work and cannot live. And in their hands these precious necessities have been divorced from their primary use, and are abused by the proprietors employing them as mere instruments for squeezing rent, interest, and profit out of their producers.

The people are not free to work for their own benefit, to produce wealth for themselves; in fact, they are unable to work at all except by permission of the monopolists, for whose profit they must toil, and when they, the monopolists, fall short of what they consider the due amount of profit, they say times are bad, even though the granaries and warehouses are full.

And we know that bad trade and glutted markets mean slackness of work, and to many a scarcity of the necessities of life. But this has nothing to do with the monopolists—indeed, it has nothing to do with anyone. In this free country everyone has perfect liberty to work if he can get it: if not, well—there is the workhouse.

The paramount duty of the monopolists is to look after their own interests, to secure as much as they can for themselves, and during periods of depression the workers have no option but to stand idly by until the abundance they have produced, which they sorely need, has been disposed of for the benefit of their masters. They are simply the helpless machinery of commerce, to be started or stopped as it suits the convenience of the proprietors, and there is every reason to fear that their condition will year by year become worse; that our foreign trade will gradually slip from our fingers; that the time is not far distant when foreigners will cease to accept the manufactured goods we now exchange with them for food, because they will be in a position, thanks to the machinery we have made for them, to produce them more cheaply themselves. And when that time comes, when greed and cut-throat competition at home and abroad—with exhausting markets on the one hand and the unceasing struggle of the workers to improve their condition at the expense of the monopolists on the other—shall have brought about deadlock and ruin, what is to become of us?

Are we to swell the ranks of the unemployed more and more

every year until the nation is practically reduced to a state of starvation? Or, before being reduced to such dire straits, are we to gain access to the land, that we may there produce for ourselves the things necessary to supply our needs?

We are told by the few thousand landowners who claim England as theirs that it does not pay to cultivate the land. Does it pay to let our own people stand idle and deteriorate physically and morally, whilst foreigners are employed in supplying us with corn and other necessities that could be produced in abundance in our own country?

These gentlemen appear to forget that "it is not to pay this or that class that God in His wisdom and benevolence has given the earth to the children of men. It was to find you and me in abundant food, comfortable clothing, commodious houses, healthy employment, and recreation, that the land was created."

These are questions that deeply concern us all. On their right solution depends our weal or woe. Solved they must be, but how, and by whom? The monopolist classes have long demonstrated their impotence and incapacity. They revel in wealth and power, whilst at their feet grovel the multitude, a terrible peril for the future. On the workers, then, in a great measure, rests the responsibility of solving these problems.

And it is the purpose of those who recognise that momentous changes are inevitable to endeavour to ensure that they shall be brought about, or at least guided, by the conscious intelligence of the workers, and not left altogether to the blind forces of hunger, misery, and despair.



The Dangers of Defective Eyesight.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Great Northern Railway.*

WITH reference to the recent deputation from the British Medical Association and the Ophthalmological Society, and their arguments before the President of the Board of Trade, and subsequent correspondence thereon, the dangers of defective eyesight among railway men of all grades, and particularly those who are employed as enginemen, signalmen, and guards, cannot be disputed. Moreover, that defective vision does to some extent exist among many of our railway men is also indisputable. It is essential that those connected with the running departments of our railways should have normal eyesight; nor is it possible for any individual to pass into either the locomotive, signal, or traffic departments without first passing a sight test sufficient to satisfy the examiner that the candidate has good eyesight and is not colour-blind. It is, therefore, certain that men who obtain employment in these departments do at the time of commencing their railway career possess at least normal eyesight; and I believe that it may be asserted that the slightest suspicion of dim-sightedness from any cause whatsoever effectually disqualifies such candidate.

It is not surprising under these circumstances that so few men are subsequently found to exhibit any of the many species of eye disease, although there are few kinds of employment, taken as a whole, where foreign bodies are so apt to take up a temporary residence in the eyes as in railway work. I am, however, of opinion that the constant watchfulness of railway men cultivates the eyesight equally as much as constant practice with dumb-bells develops the muscular system.

The eye is one of the most delicate, as well as the most complicated, organs of the body, and its diseases are but very imperfectly understood by the ordinary practitioner. That much, I think, has been fully established by the deputation named. However, my experience is that few, very few dim-sighted men retain responsible positions where the instantaneous application of their vision is essential, seeing that it is to the advantage of railway companies to encourage such men to make their case known to them, as they usually find them suitable employment in such positions where the eyesight is of a secondary consideration. In fact, it would be

most unjust if any men who developed disease of the eye after passing the "test examination" were made victims of their own misfortune. It is more than probable that such diseases are brought on in the execution of their duties, or through improper treatment by club and other doctors, who have not made a special study of this particular organ of our anatomy.

Now, let me put the case to your readers in this way:—Supposing a superintendent of one of our great railways who had to wear glasses (not an uncommon thing) to decipher the figures which it is essential for him to inspect before being passed by him, was informed by the directors that in consequence of the unfortunate dimness of his vision he would have to relinquish his position. What would be his defence? Probably he would truthfully urge that as it was attributable to his having studied too closely the interests of his employers, he felt the verdict both harsh and unjust.

In a like manner, if a driver, fireman, signalman, or guard were to be reduced in the service from the same cause, it must perforce be equally unjust.

It therefore follows that where such cases are found they should be treated with human kindness. Indeed, I believe, with rare exceptions, that such is the case, and if our employers take my advice they will under all circumstances treat with kindness and generosity those who become prematurely diseased, or who, through advanced years, are not equal to filling positions hitherto held by them. Few men live to see old age in the service, *i.e.*, comparatively speaking, and it would in such cases be a great point in our employers' favour if they were to make it a practice to allow such men to retain the full rate of pay, even where a lighter post or more suitable employment is found them. The cost would be comparatively small, and nothing to compare to the good influence such kindly treatment would create among all grades of the railway service.

Anything that creates confidence among the rank and file ought to be encouraged, and should receive the support of the directors. There are many men who would gladly accept lighter positions if they were not afraid of being reduced in wages; hence they are tempted to cling to their positions, well knowing that they ought, by merit of long service and disease of eyes or other causes, to seek such change of position. It has been stated by some of the papers that Mr. Bryce dismissed the responsibility and importance of this question too lightly. I have carefully read his reply to the deputation, and so far as railways are concerned I agree in every essential

with what he told the deputation. I am quite satisfied that both the Board of Trade and railway companies will do all in their power to introduce any proved "test" that is calculated to detect the slightest disease in the sight of candidates, who, it must be borne in mind, are very numerous, giving ample opportunity for none but the best to be selected for appointment. No one can raise objection to the most severe test being adopted at the time a candidate tenders his services; but in the case of those who through long service have developed such disease of the eye, the case calls for treatment of an entirely different nature, and it would be gross injustice to compel such men to resign from the service; nor will the companies ever adopt such method, as there are ample opportunities for suitable employment being found for those who do unfortunately develop such disease. I am pleased to say, so far as I am personally concerned, I have remarkably good eyesight; for a few years ago I was asked by a non-railwayman to attend an eye specialist, who asked him to procure a railway man, if possible, that he might show him the difference between good and bad sight. This doctor's special test was, so far as I could see, confined to a chart drawn on a big sheet of white paper, the map of each eye's power being drawn on each side from a central point, and when held up to the light, where one eye appeared weak the other certainly covered the weak place to the full extent of our respective visions. The comparative size of our two charts was the most remarkable feature, for whilst my friend's was particularly small, mine was, so the doctor said, remarkably large, much above the normal eyesight, which, he stated, was due to the watchfulness or cultivation of vision in all its essentials; whilst my friend's dimness was attributed to the tedious nature of a tailor's work and over study in music—one of his special hobbies, and he could play, too.

The doctor had also another test. A long picture-frame hung near the ceiling in a dark room, with a hidden light shining upon it. It commenced with very large letters and figures at the top and gradually got smaller until you reached the very small prints at the bottom. Here my friend failed to read correctly after the first few lines, whilst I was able to decipher even the small print close to the bottom. He had also tests for colour-blindness, which I cannot explain. There was, however, one sort of blindness he had to knuckle under to, namely, the blindness of death, for he died before my friend's eyesight had undergone a full course of treatment, which from the first acted like magic upon his failing sight.

Through Tasmania.

BY A TICKET EXAMINER, *Caledonian Railway.*

DURING my residence in Southern latitudes it was my privilege to visit the beautiful little island of Tasmania. I left Melbourne, where I had been residing for a considerable time, by the steamer *Pateena*, for Launceston, on the north coast of Tasmania. The passage across the Bass Strait was very rough, so most of the passengers suffered from that distressing complaint—sea-sickness.

The scenery up the River Tamar, at the head of which is Launceston, is very pretty, the banks of the river in many places being wooded to the water's edge.

Launceston is a thriving city of 18,000 inhabitants, the second largest in the colony. Its public buildings are handsome, and the private residences of the wealthy citizens are very fine.

During the time I was there an exhibition was being held, so the city was exceptionally gay.

One of the sights is the Cataract Gorge, where a number of large and small falls of water charm the eye of the visitor.

After spending a pleasant time in this bright little city I left for Hobart, the capital, in the south of the island. The distance of 135 miles was done in slow time, as our train was a mixed one, and called at all stations. The line is a single one, and is worked on the staff and ticket system.

There is an express train each way between Launceston and Hobart daily, which do the journey in about six hours, being at the rate of about 25 miles an hour. The gauge is only 3ft. 6in., and there are many dangerous curves, so that the speed is very fair.

Our route lay through the centre of the island, and this line at one time belonged to a private company, but within recent years it has been acquired by the Government.

Previous to that, the Government lines ran only in the north-west and south of the colony, and it was found to be a great disadvantage that the principal line did not belong to the same system. The country from Launceston to Conara Junction is principally devoted to agriculture, and many snug homesteads were passed, occasionally also a thriving village.

One of the stations passed was named "Snake Banks,"

showing that those dreaded reptiles had been numerous about there at one time.

As the country was opened and settled the snakes were destroyed, and now it is a rare occurrence to hear of a case of snake bites.

From Conara Junction a branch line runs to St. Mary's on the east coast; up this branch there are some good coal mines, which send their output all over the island. Half-way between Launceston and Hobart the train stopped for half an hour for refreshments at Parattah, in the midst of dense bush.

The surrounding country is so pretty, and the place is so quiet, as to make it an ideal rustic retreat for those who wish to get away for a time from noise and worry. The scenery calls for no special mention from Parattah to Brighton, a distance of 35 miles. The country seems suitable for farming, and is fairly well settled. One of the stations passed is called "Jerusalem," which, with another named "Jericho," brings to mind a well-known Bible incident. At Bridgewater Junction, about 10 miles from Hobart, a branch line runs to Glenora, through the picturesque valley of the river Derwent. Hops grow to perfection in this valley, and I saw many acres of them in the fields alongside the line. New Norfolk, an old-fashioned country town, is charmingly situated on the banks of the river, and is a favourite summer resort for Hobart people. The estuary of the Derwent, at the head of which is the city of Hobart, is a magnificent sheet of water, and is one of the best harbours in the South Pacific. Hobart, formerly called Hobart Town, is an old-fashioned city which very much resembles an English town. In the earlier part of this century, the chief convict prison in Van Dieman's Land, as Tasmania was then called, was here.

The convict system has been done away with for many years, but the prison still does duty as an ordinary gaol. In Hobart are the Houses of Parliament, the chief Government Offices, and many fine buildings. Mount Wellington at the back of the town is a conspicuous feature; it somewhat resembles Table Mountain at Capetown. Hobart is a great shipping port, and it has every facility for the accommodation of vessels. There are many lovely walks and drives round the town, and during the summer months it is thronged with Australians, glad to escape from the excessive heat which they often experience. From Hobart I went round by steamer to Strahan, on the west coast of the island, where at one time there was a very large convict prison for the worst class of criminals.

Thirty miles from here by rail is the town of Zeehan, a

great silver mining town, where, a few years ago, enormous speculation was done in silver shares. For a year or so back mining has not proved so successful, but it is expected to revive again. I returned to Melbourne from Zeehan after an absence of about six months, having spent a pleasant time.

I can confidently recommend those who have plenty of time and money, and who wish an enjoyable tour, to go through the lovely island of Tasmania.

Starting Poultry Keeping.

BY A CANVASSER, *Midland Railway.*

MANY of my fellow readers, perhaps, do not care for poultry (except when on the table), but I am strongly of opinion that if railway servants would turn their thoughts to the rearing and keeping of poultry, they would find a most congenial and profitable employment for the leisure moments they are proud and able to call their own, which would offer a good change of thought, of scene, and of action, not only to themselves, but also to their wives and families. Having for many years bred, reared, and exhibited fowls, I can state from a practical experience that they can be made to afford much enjoyment for spare moments, with a really good profit on the small outlay necessary to obtain it. How often is the question asked, "How can I start in a small way?" Well, people's opinions vary very much on the question, and it is, perhaps, not so easily answered. Much, of course, depends upon the facilities, space at disposal, situation, and depth of the pocket. There is no doubt the simplest and least expensive way to start poultry keeping is to buy a broody hen and a sitting of eggs from some reliable source. It is not everyone who can afford to buy a pen of birds of a good laying strain, but most servants interested can afford a few shillings for reliable sittings of eggs, and should he meet with success, although the birds will want feeding for six months before they are of any size or lay, still the cost is defrayed by easy instalments, and if at three months old there be more than one cockerel,

the others may be killed off, and the money thus realised will invariably keep the pullets until they have commenced to lay. If your space is limited, it is wise not to attempt to keep white or light-coloured fowls, but keep to brown or black Leghorns, Minorcas, Orpingtons, or even Langshans. All these are grand layers, strong, hardy, and very healthy, and if plenty of loose earth or rubbish be thrown into the run, in which the grain given them may be buried, by this simple plan your birds will be kept active and lay better (in the winter months especially) than if they had a large field to roam in. Railway servants with only a limited space need not despair, but let them start at once, and with care and perseverance they will find poultry will pay. The plan I have here suggested as to covering up the corn is a capital one, and has proved most efficacious to those who have only a small run for their poultry. If they have to scratch the ground for their food, it keeps them in a nice and healthy condition, and will not get too fat, or be subject to those diseases, such as feather-eating, etc., if they have plenty of employment. Above all, let fowls in confinement have a good supply of flint sharp grit, for as our teeth masticate the food we eat, so grit prepares and grinds the grain, etc., they eat.

Nice hot meal mixed with a little boiled potato peelings given for morning, meal scraps from table mid-day, and good sound corn at evening, with nice clean water, plenty of grit, ashes, etc., interspersed with a little green food, is the way to feed poultry, young or old, whether for laying purposes, the table, or show-pen. Before I close this article I will say briefly a few words on the rearing of chickens. By-the-bye, what a pretty sight it is to observe a hen and her brood of chickens as she leads them in quest of food, or calls them for a dainty morsel she has discovered, with that peculiar clucking cry! The maternal care she bestows upon her young is a grand lesson for human beings. Well, we will assume the twenty-first day has arrived, and you are expecting your chickens to hatch. Do not worry the hen too much, as the chicks are sustained for the first day, or even a day and a half, by the yolk which they draw up before emerging from the shell. Have ready a chicken coop, and here let me explain how a cheap and simple one may be improvised. Buy for a few pence an orange case, knock out the partitions, and at about 18 inches nail strips of wood inside to secure the hen at one end, leaving sufficient space for the chicks to run out, and for the hen to put her head through to feed and drink. With the wood from the partitions make a cover for the coop. to

lift up and down when placing the hen in and out ; the remainder may be covered with wire, and a cheap movable chicken coop is provided for about sixpence. The hen, with nice clean straw (to be changed every third day), may be placed in the partitioned coop with her chicks. For the first few days chop up finely hard-boiled eggs with a little bread or barley meal, after which chicken grits and small cheap rice may be given. Stale crusts soaked in milk should now be given daily. A little cooked meat, chopped fine, and by degrees broken wheat and a little buckwheat, may be given ; also barley meal and ground oats, made very stiff—one of the best foods. At the end of ten days a little powdered sulphur should be mixed in the meal in the proportion of one teaspoonful to every twelve chicks. I have found this cheap and simple addition to the food will have a wonderful effect in making them feather early. Early morning feeding is important to the growth of chicks, and I always throw in a little food overnight, so as to be ready when they emerge from the cover of the hen. New milk is best for drink, and will amply repay those who feed growing chicks on it, as it contains all the nutrient properties of a beneficial food. Care should be taken not to give more food than will be readily eaten ; “little and often” is my motto. Green food is most essential to the rearing of chickens ; plenty of grass, etc. Space will not permit of writing on the many varieties, etc., but those mentioned I have from practical experience found pay me well, and are suitable to railwaymen, who, by turning their thoughts to poultry keeping, save their tradesmen’s bills, and add to their oft too scanty incomes. If a man has not much spare time at his disposal, let him do as I have done—interest the wife and children, who will assist very much (to their own enjoyment) in making up the rent by paying attention to the feathered tribe, besides which it is certainly a wise plan to plant the seeds of kindness in the lives of our children by giving them the care of live stock. Believe me, it has a wonderful influence on their lives. Give them something to do, and teach them to love animals and birds. Teach your children to go for food for the fowls, to clean, attend, and take care of them, and above all, to be kind to dumb creatures. I will now conclude, and trust I have secured a few more recruits to the noble army of poultry keepers, and, if so, my article will not have been written in vain, and I sincerely wish they may meet with the success they deserve, and profit by the advice I have given.

“All is not Gold that Glitters.”

BY A GUARD, *Great Eastern Railway.*

RAILWAY folk, like the rest of the community, are considerably divided on the great liquor question. Some prefer to lubricate their parched valves with the proverbial toothful fondly known as “something short,” while others—probably the great majority—favour a drop—not to say a bath—in a mug. Apart from these two great parties, and flitting here and there like oases in the dismal desert of booze, are a select few known as the “disciples of the pump.” From remarks dropped by some members of this latter division anent an article of mine which appeared some time back, entitled “The Virtues of a Glass of Bitter,” it is evident these worthy people are of opinion that I am too partial in my remarks to what is universally admitted to be the greatest evil of our times, just as it was of the times before and after the “Flood.” On hearing these disparaging remarks, I pondered, “It will never do to appear anyway partial to one side or the other, on a question of this sort, in a paper which undoubtedly aims at being impartial and independent.” So, being an admirer of that fine old human weathercock, “The Vicar of Bray,” and not above copying his method occasionally, I exercised my memory for some authentic occurrence on the road, to form the nucleus of an anecdote in favour of the teetotal side of the drink question. As might be expected, in a land where instances of the advantages of being teetotal are daily being chronicled in our law courts, I was not long in calling to mind an appropriate incident. It is now a bygone story, having happened years ago. Joe Stedfast was a guard who ran between London and the popular seaside town of Kipperton. Joe was a smart-looking man, even on a division of the road noted for smart—not to say pompous—guards. Joe’s most prominent or great feature, as it were, was his nose. Although the sea air and open life of the road had rendered the rest of his face a brilliant ruddy hue, it was very small potatoes indeed regarding high colour when compared with the transcendent refulgency of his large Wellington-shaped nose. Joe, by reason of a sunny temperament, was well-liked by the staff on the Kipperton road. It was only here and there at wide intervals that some irreverent, irrepressible joker of low condition among the porters so

far forgot himself as to address Joe as "Trunky," and that only after Joe's train had got well started from the joker's station, without fear of being pulled up again: for though Joe, like most big, good-tempered animals, was hard to upset, he was a very awkward customer to deal with when he was.

Nervous passengers, carrying fat, well-filled spirit flasks, eyed Joe's sparkling nose with distrust, so certain were they that the possessor of such a shining proboscis must also habitually carry a pocket pistol. But here they were grievously wrong in their conjectures, for Stedfast was one of the select few who fight the drink dragon beneath the banner of blue. In other words, Joe was known far and near as a "tote." And thereby hangs my tale.

John Watchfinder and William Spoutem were a couple of professionals of whom any modern Fagin might have been proud. Their principal field of operations was the race-course, where, though their business was of a varied character, it had, like many larger professional firms, one common object, viz., the working of the business to the advantage of themselves and the disadvantage of their fellow man, whoever that luckless individual might happen to be. "First come first served," was the motto of the firm of Watchfinder and Spoutem. An enterprising firm they were, too, who did not let the green blades grow beneath their Whitechapel brown 'uns, but improved the shining hour, while on their way to and from the course, by every now and again making most lamentable blunders when getting their luggage from the brake. "Here, you sir! Where are you taking that bag? That's mine!" was a common exclamation soon after the firm made their appearance at the train van. On which remonstrance the blundering gentleman, with many expressions of regret and surprise at the close resemblance of the bag to his own, would recommence the search for his own, which might or might not resemble the other, as the firm's luggage varied considerably in size and appearance. It consisted at times of an old newspaper and three pieces of pasteboard, and a portmanteau. This was about the size of it, when, one night, after a disastrous day at Kipperton races, they stood back in the recess of the booking office at the station, watching with business eyes the passengers booking for London. "What's the state of the bank?" gloomily enquired William. "Why, it's lucky we took returns!" answered John, "as we shouldn't have got far on two half-dollars, and one of them a 'waster.' There's that Waterbury you was clever enough to capture," he added, with a touch of sarcasm. "Well, anyhow, that Waterbury will buy the brass clock (i.e.,

large watch) you was hunting all day, and left with the landlady to settle our score," retorted Spoutem, warmly. "Well, stow your gab," said John; "who's this lot?" The remark was occasioned by the stentorian voice—enquiring for a first class to London—of Sir Clyde Tollol, a county magnate, who had the reputation of being able by a whisper in the ears of the railway authorities to terminate any ordinary employé's term of service, provided the whisper was of a derogatory nature. But Sir Clyde was not so much an object of interest to the dual firm as his luggage. "That dressing bag's up to a 150, or may I never see a judge again!" whispered Watchfinder.

"Give my things to Stedfast, the guard, Thomas!" said Sir Clyde to the big footman, who forthwith delivered into the not unwilling hands of Joe a few small leather receptacles, among which was the bag that looked so bonny in the eyes of the two professionals. But how to get it? that was the rub. They had gone through the barrier, close behind John Thomas and Sir Clyde. Spoutem, who was more superficial in his observations than his deeper mate, on seeing Stedfast, had merely remarked under his breath, "Struth! What a mighty boko!" Watchfinder, however, after finding an unoccupied carriage for the journey—as, in view of the probable capture, on this occasion they decided to travel alone—said little or nothing till well on the way. Spoutem, aware that he was working out a plan, did not disturb him, but occupied himself by getting on with winding the Waterbury annexed at Kipperton. Presently John looked up with a start. "Bill," said he—cocking his thumb in the direction of the guard's van—"did you see that chap's nose?" "Did I see Kipperton Town Hall when we stood in front of it?" was the questioning reply of Bill. "Did it suggest any plan to you?" "Well, no, can't say that it did; what's your game?" "My game is this, Spoutem, old pal; it's as clear as mud, and as simple as that wretched Waterbury. Listen! this rattler stops at Switch Station about six minutes, to water the bloomin' engine, and rap up the wheels a bit. The rear end of the platform is always as dark as a black cat: that's the place where we stops. Nobody ever comes back there, these slack times, to get in. We gets out, I meanders round one of the pillars against the guard's van, you goes up to the guard and asks him if there's time to get a drink, and asks him, careless like, if he'll have one too. When you comes back you gets into another part of the train while I stop here, with the old portmanteau there with the false bottom, in which there'll be the

old toff's bag, in case they searches the train after the bag is missed." "Ah," says Spoutem, dubiously, "supposin' he won't come into the bar, what then?" "Spoutem!" said John, reproachfully, "I gave you credit for better judgment of a man's nose. It's a hundred thousand pounds to a gooseberry he'll come in; why, it's ten to one you won't have to ask him; he'll say how thundering dry it is, and follow you in."

Well, Switch was reached; and all went as John W. prognosticated—up to a certain point. He saw from his post behind the pillar his mate accost the guard, he saw them both walk towards the refreshment room. I might here casually remark, he did not see the district superintendent standing like a sentinel outside the refreshment room doors; but that by the way. Now John was in such a hurry to annex that bag, that, unfortunately for him, he did not wait till the bar door closed on them. But as no one was in the vicinity—the business all going on in the front part of the train—he nipped into the brake as soon as the guard and Spoutem moved off. He was nearly three-quarters of a minute finding the bag, and as he scurried out of the van he nearly fell into the arms of Stedfast, who was getting in. The reader may easily guess the rest of this little drama in real life. Spoutem was nabbed as well, and the previous record of the dual firm gained them a well-earned retirement for some years. I recollect the well-known criminal lawyer who defended the two beauties—after the manner of such gentlemen when cross-examining—vainly endeavouring to take a rise out of Stedfast by waxing sarcastic about his nose. It would have been impertinence in a witness, but was pleasantry in a lawyer. Said the bewigged one: "You will excuse my inquisitiveness, guard, but how do you account for the high colour of your nose, being, as you are, a strict teetotaller?"

"Indigestion, sir!" was the laconic reply of the good-tempered, smiling Stedfast, who congratulated himself, as he wended his way from the musty, heated law courts, in search of some quiet retreat where he might refresh himself with a bottle of his favourite tippie—ginger-beer—on the fact of his having stuck so closely to his teetotal principles, for had he not done so he would probably have been dismissed the service; at all events, he certainly would not have had the felicitation of fingering that crisp ten-pound note of Sir Clyde's that now lay in his purse.

To this day Watchfinder never believes Spoutem's story, that on asking Stedfast to have a drink the guard first walked a little way with him, then suddenly stopped and informed him in stentorian tones that he was a teetotaller, and before

he (Spoutem) had time to say another word the guard whipped round and hurried back to the van. No; the waves which in summer time lap lazily on Kipperton's unequalled sands are blue, beautifully blue; but for a genuine cerulean hue they are not in it with the language used by the firm of "Watchfinder and Spoutem" whenever their conversation turns on the subject of Guard Stedfast's nose.

Railway Shippers.

By A GOODS CLERK, *Midland Railway.*

O the outside world the above heading would seem rather vague, but those employed on our iron roads know full well what the chief part of a shipper's duties consist of.

Taking the various departments in railway offices of to-day, I think the one most disliked by the generality of clerks is that of the Shipping Department, no doubt from the fact of the very awkward hours the clerks in this department have to work, and also of having to do night duty.

On being told by my worthy chief that my turn to do these duties came next, I felt in anything but a cheerful mood, for having heard the dread experiences of my predecessors, and coupled with a growing dislike for this work, I did not relish the change at all; however, this feeling soon wore off, and I began to look forward to the day when the change was to be effected.

I will now try as clearly as possible to describe the duties as performed by the day shipper.

The first thing to do is to clear up any invoices or consignment notes that may have been left over by the night man; then, if any cash has been taken from the drayman on the previous day, it has to be entered in the cash book in time to be checked by the chief accounts clerk, who, if the book is not quite ready when he wants it, generally has a lot to say to the "poor shipper," but if the book is ready and he omits to check the cash, he believes in the old adage of "The least said soonest mended." Then follows the making out of porters' bills, the amount of carriage for returned empties being given to the yardmen to be collected, and the bills for goods are handed to the townsmen, who are generally waiting

for them, and if not passed in due course, they, too, are down on the "poor shipper." After the bills have been completed, the previous night's consignment notes have to be registered. This, to an outsider, would appear to be a slight task, but there is more work attached to them than one would suppose. After having entered the notes in a register, they have to be gone through again, and any goods that have been received unentered from a tranship station, or goods received from the public without a consignment note, have to be reported; then if a note has been received, and the goods, for some reason or other, have been left off, or goods received in bad order, these have to be reported in the "not to hand" book and "goods in bad order" book respectively. The afternoon's work constitutes entering invoices through the tranship book (the station at which I am employed is a tranship station) and also invoicing up goods for the afternoon trains. The evening's work commences at 5.30, and is the hardest throughout the day. About six o'clock the drays begin to arrive, and from this time till nine o'clock is one continual rush; for unless the shippers worked their hardest it would be impossible to get the invoices ready for the night trains, and "leaving off" the invoices entails a lot of extra work, both for the forwarding, tranship, and receiving stations, bringing down innumerable blessings on the head of the poor shipper from the various departments concerned.

The various invoices having been put up in their separate pads and handed to one of the outside staff, who hastens off to nail them to the trucks, the day shipper waits to hear the whistle of the departing train blow, and then he is free. Leaving at nine o'clock does not give him much time to himself, for by the time he has reached home, and supped, it is bedtime.

The night shipper commences work at 5.30 p.m., and, after assisting to invoice until nine o'clock, retires till eleven for supper, and then is on duty again. After he has invoiced any goods that may be going away by the early morning trains, he has to check the previous night's invoices, and then any over or undercharges, goods entered to wrong stations, or charges omitted, have to be taken up by him. Then any correspondence dealing with the department has to be put in order, and any mineral traffic that may be passing has to be invoiced and abstracted, the invoices being sent to the stations to which the goods are going, and the abstracts to the mineral manager. Frequently it occurs that a wagon breaks down, and the contents have to be transhipped. This means that the shipper has to make out a set of duplicate invoices

to send on to the various stations to which the goods are going, and from my experience a crippled wagon is generally minus invoices. After these duties have been performed the shipper may be able to catch a few minutes' rest (which is rarely the case) until the delivery clerk comes on at 6.30 a.m.

The chief shipper at a large station holds a position of great responsibility, for with him rests the accurate forwarding of goods, delays of which in some cases involve heavy claims. He needs to be very accurate in his calculations, and also to have a good geographical knowledge of the country. If he be not good at figures cases of undercharge often arise which, as a rule, if not detected by the receiving station, cause great inconvenience, and often the consignee has to be sued before he will pay. In a great many cases the checker is at a loss to know where to load a certain article, and were it not for the shipper's knowledge of the country, it would often be loaded a long way out of its proper course.

One of the greatest difficulties of the shipper is forwarding goods under mark (which marks are frequently made quite undiscernible by the sender), and, unless he is very careful to ascertain the correct marks before forwarding the goods, are often entirely lost. I think the sooner this practice is done away with the better both for public and railway companies alike.

I would strongly recommend any young clerks who have the option of going into the shipping department not to refuse, as a great deal of experience is to be gained which will, I am sure, prove to be of great service to them in years to come.



A Popular Holiday Resort.

BY A GOODS CLERK, *Great Western Railway.*

“**I**N the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love,” was the poet's song in the pre-railway days, but nowadays the locomotive has annihilated time and space; distant highly-favourable holiday haunts are accessible to all of moderate means, and our thoughts naturally turn to the pleasant and highly interesting subject of “where shall we spend our holidays?” As the Isle of Man is the subject of my article—that being the spot where I have spent the happiest holiday since I joined the service—I propose to offer a few remarks which will, I hope, prove useful to intending visitors to Manxland during the coming summer. To railwaymen the Isle of Man offers facilities for cheap and easy transit; since most of the large lines run into Liverpool, and free passes having been obtained to that place, the boat fare thence to the Isle of Man is very moderate indeed, the handsomely built and comfortably arranged steamers of the Steam Packet Company rendering the sea passage to Douglas an enjoyable experience in nearly every case. I would, however, offer one suggestion, which, if taken up properly by the Interchange Privilege Ticket Committee, would, I feel sure, lead to a successful issue before the holiday season commences. The Steam Packet Company, at one time, issued free passes indiscriminately to railway servants who could best afford to pay, but as railway companies declined to reciprocate the privilege, they stiffened their backs, and allowed passes only on a special recommendation from the general manager of the railway upon which the applicant was employed. Few railway servants care to go through this cumbersome method, and prefer to pay a few shillings rather than risk a curt refusal from their superiors. From a conversation, however, which I had with one of the officials at the Liverpool offices, I incline to the belief that the Steamboat Company would readily agree to issuing tickets at half price to railway servants and their wives. This privilege, as our readers are aware, is granted by the London Boat Companies, the Bristol Channel, and several other firms, and we may be sure that such a courteous and business-like firm as the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company would, if properly approached, only be too pleased to acquiesce in

the request of a body of men who contribute so materially towards bringing grist to their mill; for it is calculated that forty-nine fiftieths of their passengers are brought to them by the railways.

Once on board one of the floating palaces, you have only one thing to beware of, and that is the "steamboat tout." Several of these objectionable persons travel daily to and from Liverpool and secure, no doubt, a sufficient number of victims to justify their expenditure in fares. You may secure comfortable accommodation, but it is preferable to obtain a recommendation from a friend before leaving home. A stamped directed envelope sent to the stationmaster or foreman at the railway stations at either Douglas or Ramsey will bring you several addresses with tariff, etc., from which a selection can be made and depended upon. There are several very well-appointed houses facing the beach, at which the charges will be found reasonable, ranging from 5s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. per day, and in this connection it may be well to remind the intending visitor that it will be to his benefit to stipulate before engaging apartments that meals not partaken of at the house be allowed for. One of the charms of the Island is the facilities it offers for a complete day's absence from Douglas, by means of a drive to one or other of the interesting spots in the Isle, or a trip round it by steamer. The visitor will therefore be a little in pocket if he remembers the hint. The pleasures and the superior attractions a house on the promenade offers, above those situated away from a sight of the sea, fully compensate for the little extra expense incurred. Railwaymen who take their wives with them will, however, find abundant means of disposing of their spare cash, and if they are perforce compelled to study "ways and means" very closely, they will find it to their advantage to select lodgings away from the beach—the Peel Road locality, for instance—and to arrange terms for sleeping accommodation and cooking only. Food can be bought at fairly reasonable prices in the town; fish is very cheap, if an early visit before breakfast be paid to the fish market.

From the experience I have gained at most of the English and Welsh seaside resorts, I can safely say that for a maximum of enjoyment at a minimum of expense the Isle of Man takes the palm. I have no intention of dwelling upon the varied beauties of Manxland. Mr. Hall Caine, one of the foremost living novelists, has described them in a chatty and interesting manner in a little book published by the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company, Liverpool, which may be

obtained from their offices upon receipt of two stamps to cover postage. After you have read it I have no doubt that you will at once make up your mind to pay a visit to the land of tailless cats, and if you are not of an atrabilious temperament you cannot fail to pass a most enjoyable time. Railwaymen in the Yorkshire and Lancashire districts need be told nothing about the beautiful spot. In my wanderings over the Island it was my pleasure to meet several whose dialect at once betrayed them, and jolly companions I found them. There are some chronic cantankerous individuals always writing about the Island, and lamenting the boisterous mirth these large-hearted toilers from the thickly-populated centres indulge in. I entirely fail to see why a dozen men or so, seeking one week's respite from fifty-two weeks of hard and honest toil, should not be able to ride to Laxey Glen, or Glen Helen, or any other charming spot, and sing "Molly and I," as often as they please, and to the accompaniment of as many accordions as they think fit to take with them, without exciting the wrath of these melancholy persons who fancy England's most salubrious and beautiful resorts should be monopolised by their own ilk. There are those who would banish the "nigger." I plead guilty to having spent seven whole mornings on Douglas Head listening to their patter, and inhaling the health-giving ozone of the Irish Sea, and I don't regret it. Time never hangs heavily on your hands. If the weather be fine there are innumerable methods of enjoying yourself. You may go out mackerel fishing for a shilling, but you will find the honest Manxmen are more anxious to hook human beings into their boats before starting than they are to hook the fish when well out to sea. Bathing accommodation is everything that can be desired. The water is beautifully limpid, and the arrangements for young swimmers' safety are well conceived. In short, Douglas and its environs offer the tourist all sorts and conditions of legitimate pleasure at very moderate prices.



Ten Terrible Minutes in a Train.

By J. B. S.

ONE November evening, a few years ago, I had occasion to travel from Cannon Street to Spa Road Station, on the South Eastern Railway. It had been a cold, foggy day throughout, and there were comparatively few passengers. The compartment which I entered—a second class—had but one previous occupant, a stoutly-built man of thirty-five or forty. He was attempting, with evidently small success, to read a book, and he fidgeted about on his seat in rather a testy fashion.

Having a doubt as to the regularity of the trains on such an evening, I said, "I suppose this stops at Spa Road?"

"Spa Road! Of course it does," said this gentleman, with what I considered unnecessary vehemence. "All these trains stop at Spa Road."

"Don't thank me, sir," he said a moment later. "I only answered a simple question—a fool or a madman could do that."

Here the train moved slowly off, and the speaker, whose face I had not yet seen, resumed his efforts to read, muttering now and again an imprecation at the expense of the fog and the cold.

When we reached the glass dome of the Borough Market the train came to a stop, and for the first time I found myself in a position to obtain a good view of my fellow-passenger. Hitherto he had obstinately kept his back or shoulders towards me. Now he threw his volume down on the seat, and faced me. He was, as I have said, a man in the full prime of life. Rather over the average height, he had the broad shoulders, full chest, and nervous hand of an athlete. The impression which his features produced was decidedly unpleasant. Yet, save for the eyes, which had a peculiar and indescribable glare in them, the face was not an unhandsome one.

"I did not know that we were so close to the Crystal Palace," he said, brusquely.

"The Crystal Palace!" said I, in some surprise; "we are not near the Sydenham Palace."

"The fog has affected your eyesight, my friend," was the reply. "Trouble yourself to look out of this window."

"Oh, that!" I said, smiling. "You like your joke, sir,

I perceive. The Borough Market must feel flattered indeed to be mistaken for Sydenham Palace."

"Borough Market! Of course, it was only my joke," laughed my companion. But there was no mirth in the laugh.

He now took up his book again, and made another attempt to read. Though he fixed his eyes on the page, and even now and again turned a leaf, it was evident that his reading was little better than a pretence. Indeed, it was so dark in the carriage that to see the small characters in an ordinary volume was to me quite impossible. While he was thus engaged the train reached London Bridge. The moment we entered the station my companion, who had drawn nearer to me, returned to his seat in the corner farthest from the platform. From this he gazed with evidently eager interest on the people passing and repassing the carriage door. As at Cannon Street, the number of these was not great, and we were still alone when the train again moved off.

The moment we were outside the station a change came over my fellow-passenger. He threw his book on the floor, and rose to his feet. Hitherto I had, being pre-occupied with my own thoughts, given small heed to him. Now, without knowing why, I felt myself fascinated. There was a light in his dark eyes, an expression in his mouth, which at once repelled and attracted me.

"Have you been much of a traveller?" he asked, suddenly. He was standing with his back to the door, watching me curiously.

"I have never been out of the island," I replied.

"Ah!" he said, "I have been everywhere—Italy, Russia, India, China, Timbuctoo, Ashantee—anywhere—everywhere. I have been near the North Pole, and quite at the South."

"Indeed, you must be a very great traveller, sir," I said.

"I have never been to the moon. No man can be a great traveller who has not been there."

"Then I'm afraid that, with the exception of those famous heroes of Jules Verne, there are very few about."

"Just so, just so! And yet a trip up above this detestable fog beyond the clouds would be enjoyable. In a night like this it would be peculiarly so; don't you agree with me?"

"Not quite," I said; "for my own part, I'd much rather be at my fireside."

"You would, would you? Look at that, smell that, taste that cursed fog." He threw open the window and certainly the fog which poured in was bad enough in all conscience.

"I grant you it is not pleasant, either for eyes or throat," I said.

"I knew you would," continued my strange companion. "Anyone would be glad to get out of it. The man who could free you from it would deserve your thanks, would he not?"

There was a light in the speaker's eyes which I did not like, and there was a movement at the corners of his mouth the opposite of pleasant. Whilst not feeling the least dread of him, I was not yet without a strong desire to reach Spa Road. As bad luck would have it, while yet we had not made half the short journey, the train again came to a sudden stop.

"Yes, he would be a public benefactor who could deliver the people of London from the fog," I said.

"He would, would he not?" whispered my companion, eagerly. "Then I am the man."

As he spoke he crouched down and looked up at me with a glare that made me start. He buttoned his coat and pulled up his sleeves, as he whispered again, "I am the man. I can free you from these fogs—I can free myself."

For the first time the thought now flashed into my mind that I was alone with a madman. I recognised now that wild light in his eyes, that strange twitching at the corners of the mouth. I do not suppose that I am constitutionally more timid than most of my neighbours, yet at this moment I felt a cold sweat break all over me, and I know that I looked eagerly out in the darkness, hoping that as now the train was slowly moving we were near the station. I saw only the thick fog and the feeble light of here and there a lamp.

Yes, the man was mad—raving mad. There could be no doubt about it. Only a maniac could laugh the mirthless laugh which now came from his throat, as he drew two steps nearer to me, and hissed at me, "We shall travel together to the moon. Adieu to the fogs; say with me, adieu to the fogs."

I was now erect, watching my companion intently, nerving myself for a struggle, which it was easy to tell was very near. I could easily see I was no match for such an antagonist. My hope was that I might hold my own for the few minutes necessary to reach Spa Road, where plenty of assistance would be available.

"Your balloon would scarcely travel on such a night," I said, with affected indifference. "The atmosphere is too thick."

"Too thick! do you think so?" he said.

"I do so. Consider the density of the fog. How could we possibly get through it?"

"Well, there's something in that," he said, sitting down. "Yet the effort is worth a trial. Yes, it is worth a trial." He sprang anew to his feet, and approached me. He threw out his strong hands and made a clutch at my throat.

"This is how we begin; this is how I get the gas for the trip. I kill you first, to give you the start. Then I start myself, and follow you." One shout I gave for help, but it was lost in the report of a fog signal; then we were swaying backwards and forwards in the carriage, in a struggle which was literally for life or death. The madman's breath came hot on my face, his strong arm held me in a fierce embrace. There was a fierce joy in his eyes.

The foam worked out of his mouth, and his teeth gnashed angrily against each other.

Life is dear, and I felt no inclination to yield mine without a desperate struggle. I tore my antagonist's hands from my throat, and for a moment forced him to act on the defensive. I shouted again and again for help, and how I longed for Spa Road no words can describe. The train was now running at a good rate, and I knew the station could not be far off. If I could only hold my own for one half minute all would be safe.

Pausing in his exertions for a moment, the madman suddenly quitted me. Just then, to my horror, the train rushed through my station without even slackening speed. I was in the wrong train, and there was no hope of assistance till we reached New Cross. It was evident that my fellow-passengers had not heard my shouts for assistance.

Without a word of warning, my companion again threw himself upon me, this time with a fury so resistless that I was borne to the floor.

"We shall go to the moon," he shrieked. "I have a knife—we can cut our way through the fog."

I felt myself helpless. My previous exertions had exhausted my strength, while that of the maniac seemed to increase with the struggle. Strive as I might, I was utterly and entirely in his power now.

How slowly the train seemed to move! I believe now that it was going at a good speed, but to me it appeared to progress at a snail's pace. And how curiously vivid were my thoughts! I saw the home where I was expected, the kind faces waiting to greet me. I wondered what they'd say when they heard of my death. I caught myself thinking how ugly were the madman's eyes, and I even noticed the colour of his necktie—blue, with white spots. I no longer felt any inclination to shout for help. To all intents I looked upon myself

as dead. I even began to think of myself as a third person, and to lament, in a philosophical fashion, the ill-fortune which cut off, at the beginning of his career, a promising young man. Then I remembered that I owed a shoemaker for a pair of boots, and I pitied the unfortunate tradesman for the bad debt he had made. While these and a hundred other thoughts were passing through my brain, it seemed to me that an age had transpired. In reality, I do not suppose that at the outside more than a minute had elapsed since my unlucky fall. Suddenly, as in a dream, I heard the madman, who now was seated astride my chest, hiss:

"We'll cut our way to the moon—my knife is sharp. Let's try it on your throat."

With curious deliberation, he drew a strong pocket-knife, and opened it.

"All right, friend, eh?" he cried, laughing. "Now, mind, do not leave the carriage till I have come up to you."

"I am swift," said I, and I declare I did not recognise my own voice. "If I go first you shall certainly not overtake me—you start, and I'll follow."

"Me start?"

"Yes; you're braver, stronger, and you have the knife. You must go first to clear the way."

"Of course, I forgot that," he cried, almost to my horror, so utterly was I surprised. "Of course I forgot that," he again cried. "I must clear the way."

Still sitting on me, he deliberately drew the bright blade across his throat. In another moment I was deluged with blood. At the same time the knife fell from his nerveless grasp. To spring to my feet, to seize the open wound, and press the edges together was the work of an instant—though the sudden escape made me stagger. At the same moment we reached New Cross Station, and a porter threw open the carriage door.

Fortunately, the self-inflicted wound of the madman did not prove fatal. Ultimately I heard that the blood-letting had a beneficial effect on his brain. I discovered next day that he was a most dangerous lunatic who had managed to escape from a private asylum.

To my surprise, when I looked at the clock at New Cross I found that the journey from London Bridge had not taken ten minutes. They were certainly the longest ten minutes I ever spent.

The Opportunities of Life.

BY A DISTRICT AUDITOR, *North Eastern Railway, Thirsk.*

NEVER did the late Lord Beaconsfield utter a wiser sentence than when, speaking to a company of young men, he said, "The great secret of success in life is to be ready when your opportunity comes."

This sentence is full of meaning and worthy of our best thought. I am convinced that it is just here where so many fail to succeed in life, and especially in railway life; they are not ready when the opportunity comes.

A position is vacant, and the enquiry of the executive is, "Where shall we find a suitable successor?" Names are mentioned, but there is some drawback—the fact is, they are not ready, and the post is filled by a comparative stranger.

"Time" is a word of indefinite extent, but "opportunity" is a sharply defined word.

It means the very nick of time—the golden moment for the doing of a thing.

It means that especial season most favourable for the purpose.

Every day brings to each of us opportunities of improvement, which we may neglect, or never notice.

In the experience of mankind special, signal occasions occur, upon the right use of which will depend success or failure, joy or sorrow, life or death.

One of the sentences inscribed on the walls of the Temple of Delphos was, "Know thy opportunity."

Such seasons form the "tide in the affairs of men," of which Shakespeare sang:

"Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

We are surrounded by men who did not take the tide of their affairs at its flood, and, as a consequence, have been voyaging ever since in the shallows of adversity and difficulty.

A Spanish proverb says: "The road of By-and-by leads to the town of Never."

"Opportunity," says an old Latin writer, "has hair in front, behind she is bald; if you seize her by the forelock you may hold her; but if suffered to escape, not Jupiter himself can catch her again."

We have read the legend of one who, day-dreaming in his chair, beheld a vision which stood before him and beckoned him to follow her to fortune. He heeded not her call, nor her beckoning, until at last she grew dim and disappeared.

Just as the vision faded he sprang to his feet and cried out, "Tell me who thou art?" and received the answer, "I am Opportunity; once neglected, I never return."

If we mean to make headway in life we must use present opportunities, which come to us all, in one form or another, and oftentimes in the simplest, commonest things.

There is no lesson that needs stronger emphasis than that of seizing the chances of to-day. How many let them slip and say, "To-morrow we will bestir ourselves."

If the history of that word "to-morrow" could be written, how sad would be the record!

That word has been the wreck of unnumbered duties: it has dashed soaring aspirations into the mire; it has brought regret and shame to hundreds of hearts; it is the grave of honour, and glory, and enterprise.

To-day the story of the artist is full of meaning. He long sought a piece of sandalwood out of which to carve a Madonna. When about to give up in despair, leaving the hope of his life unattained, he was bidden in a dream to shape the figure from a block of oak-wood which was destined for the fire. He obeyed the command and produced a masterpiece.

In like manner, many young men, in every department of life, wait for opportunities of a great and brilliant nature. While all through the plain, common days the very opportunities they require lie close to them in the most familiar passing events.

In this way many a young fellow goes through life, achieving nothing; sighing for this or that gift, or power, or position, and then he would do great things, but with his present means and poor chances he can do nothing worthy of himself.

Another young man who has only the same means, the same power or position, achieves a splendid success.

History is full of illustrations of the use and abuse of opportunities.

The *Central America* perished at sea some years ago. As the night closed in the captain of a ship near at hand, seeing the crippled, sinking state of the steamer, urged her captain to send at once all the passengers on board his vessel. He hesitated. Again he was urged. "No," he said. "lay

by me till morning." The ship tried to keep near the steamer, but could not.

In less than two hours the *Central America* went down, and the great majority of her passengers perished.

There was the opportunity of escape, but it was neglected. To hesitate is sometimes to suffer loss.

Opportunities ripen to be plucked and utilised.

The wise and successful man understands the meaning of the word "now," and uses present opportunities. Some men are like the cow's tail—always behind. Such men are not of much use in this world.

It is no use rushing into the station when the train is gone, or locking the stable door when the horse is stolen. It is no use waiting for "something to turn up"; the proper way is to go and turn it up.

It has been said that we can make our own opportunities. This to a certain extent is true. The right way to deal with adverse circumstances is to go on fighting the battle of life, up hill, against all opposing forces.

Many successful men have done this. Instead of bemoaning their hard lot they have bowed to the inevitable, and used it to their advantage. Instead of asking for an improved chess-board, they have taken the one before them and played the game. The fact is, a great opportunity is worth to a man just what his antecedents have enabled him to make it.

We are not absolute masters of our physical, material, or moral lives.

Heredity has something to say on this subject.

But so far as we have the opportunity of shaping our lives, so far we are responsible for their forms.

Opportunities soon pass away. The old proverb says, "Fortune knocks once at every man's door." When this was quoted in the ears of a dawdling specimen of humanity, he said, "Well, if Fortune ever knocked at my door, it was a runaway knock." Probably he was not ready when the knock was given.

Hazlitt says: "Four things come not back—the spoken word, the sped arrow, the past life, the neglected opportunity." There are occasions in our life which never come to us but once. It is our duty to watch for and improve them ere they pass away for ever.

There are times when the least delay is perilous.

When the life-boat goes out to a shipwrecked crew, now is the opportunity for the men to escape from a watery grave.

When a house is on fire and the fire-escape is placed against the window, now is the opportunity for the parents and children to escape.

The great lesson we all need to learn is to grasp the opportunities the moment they appear.

A person was walking along the sea-shore, gathering the treasures that were left on the sands. He was searching in a dreamy way; listlessly looking here and there. Suddenly the waves left at his feet a most beautiful shell. "That shell is safe enough," he said; "I can pick that up at my leisure." But as he waited, a higher wave swept along the beach, re-captured the shell, and bore it back to the ocean.

Is not this a picture of our opportunities? They seem to lie at our feet. We delay for a short time, and when we turn again the opportunity is gone.

Just as opportunities are used or not used, so fortunes are made or unmade, positions are gained or not gained.

This subject is applicable to the whole man in his social, mental, and moral nature.

The successful man is he who knows the way to do the right thing at the right time, and this comes from trained habits and thought.

It is essential that a man should think—"ponder the path of his feet"—that his ways may be established.

A beautiful story is told of a young girl in the days of the Commonwealth, whose lover Cromwell had condemned to die at the ringing of the curfew bell. The heroic maiden climbed to the top of the belfry tower, and just as the sexton commenced pulling the rope she grasped the tongue of the bell, and swung to and fro between heaven and earth until the deaf old sexton had left the church. The brave deed has been handed down to us, and shall be told in future years.

The people who have proved useful in an emergency are those whose characters have been forming day by day. Our life-history is being written sentence by sentence, with thoughts, and words, and deeds.

I would not write to discourage any who have neglected opportunities in the past, but would rather urge by the memory of wasted hours the improvement of the chances of to-day.

There is opportunity for the most ordinary people to make their lives bright and useful. It is not necessary to do great and conspicuous things.

The most of us must be content to live commonplace lives,

without attracting the attention of the world, or winning distinction or fame.

Let us devote ourselves to the duties that spring out of our ordinary business and social relations.

The words of Elihu Burritt, the learned blacksmith, may fitly close this paper.

While working ten hours a day at the anvil, he mastered many languages. He says, "If I was ever actuated by ambition, its highest and warmest aspirations reached no further than the hope to set before the young men of my country an example in employing those invaluable fragments of time called 'odd moments.'"

Select Information.

BY A GUARD, *Great Eastern Railway.*

THE strictly correct information conveyed in the following narrative may possibly be ancient news to many among the unco' clever division, but as it may come in the light of a beneficial revelation to several not so well versed in the ways of the world, I venture to give it here.

Jack Balmy had been porter at the aristocratic little suburban station of Wharsbrook longer than many pushing individuals who are now full-bearded stationmasters had been on the line. And Jack was still only a porter. Yet Jack was not one of your country dullards who never know anything. On the contrary, Jack had for many years enjoyed the reputation of being an exceedingly well informed man. I am not prepared to swear here that his special information included such trivial matters as a definite knowledge of what time the next train started for London, or arrived therefrom. On these little matters rumour had it Jack was frequently distinctly hazy, more so on any great race day. But there, even in this competitive age one cannot be expected to be well up in everything. No! Balmy's bent was not in the direction of such a life worrying affair as a railway, though he had to sadly put up with it in order to keep his wife and several chubby-faced youngsters going in grub.' Sometimes as I viewed the perforated boots and airy condition of these youngsters' nether garments, I could not help thinking what a pity it was Balmy's exclusive information did not enable

him to keep them a little more compact. The exclusive information referred to had to do with the sport of Kings, and was connected with the private doings of that darling of the British public—the British race-horse. Did “Blindem” the bookmaker have a fifty-pound plater—supposed to be a wretched weed—in his stable, capable of running away from Lord Yellowboy’s Derby favourite, then Jack Balmy was sure to be in the know. Did it happen that that raging public fancy, “Ramrod,” suddenly developed while at exercise a griping pain in his “tummy”—why, Balmy was the one who got the information straight. Unfortunately not always in time to enable him to hedge his shilling. Still there was the inestimable consolation of receiving the information direct from the course, for Balmy got his information from Hiram Topweight, whose well-known advertisement ran as follows in that popular publication, the *Champion Winner-finder*:—“To noblemen and gentlemen with money only. Hiram Topweight, first cousin to Tommy Topweight, the celebrated jockey, will attend Oldmarket races next week, and will wire certain select information direct from headquarters on receipt of P.O., etc.—Apply —”

But Balmy’s P.O.’s no longer find their way into the pocket of Tommy Topweight’s talented relative, and the reason why is as follows:

It was the morning of the principal day of the Oldmarket race-week, and Balmy—who was on late duty—had slipped up to town to spend a few hours in the purlieus of Shoreditch, with a few bosom pals, in order to go over the form of the horses engaged to run in the great race that afternoon on Oldmarket’s famous heath. Balmy’s special wire would also arrive at Oldmarket at a little pub. down a little alley, towards which favoured spot Balmy was making his way, when who should he meet coming out of the alley but old Jabez Hartful, the guard of the fast train to Oldmarket that morning. Jabez was about the last person Balmy would have expected to meet in such a district, for Jabez was accounted to be one of the “unco’ guid.” Balmy and Jabez could never quite hit it together. Jabez, when in Balmy’s company, had an unpleasant habit of making pointed remarks anent Balmy’s sporting propensities—such as “a fool and his money’s soon parted,” etc., and other uncomplimentary comments. Therefore Balmy was somewhat astonished when Jabez pulled up in front of him, and said with a smile, “Good morning, Jack! Do you want a good tip for to-day?” Of course Jack said he didn’t mind. And Jabez, drawing him away into a quiet corner, said in true tipster’s mysterious tones, as he

drew forth from his breast pocket a roll of papers, "Look here, Jack, my lad. As you know, this is my last week on the line; next week I retire on my pension, so if I can trust you to let this tip go no farther, you may as well have a look at it." Wonderingly, Jack said of course he knew how to keep a good thing dark. Whereupon Jabez selected a paper from the bundle and handed it to Jack, saying, "That is one of this roll of telegrams I am going to send off from Oldmarket P.O. about half-past twelve this morning. A gentleman who lives up the alley there asked me to send them off for him, just as a favour, you know, Jack." Well, Balmy's eyes opened wider than they had ever done before as he opened the paper and read the following:

"Oldmarket P.O.—Hiram Topweight to Balmy, 'Jug and Bottle,' Shoreditch,—Have just seen Sweatem, the trainer, and he tells me Tealeaf is a cert. for the Blue Ribbon Stakes."

"Well! this is all a go," said the astounded Balmy. "So Topweight lives up there, does he?"

"That's about the size of it," said Jabez, as he put the telegrams away again in his pocket.

"Here, I say, Hartful," said Balmy, after a moment's thought, "you don't send them off without a bit for yourself, I suppose?"

"Send them away for nothing! Why, my dear brother Balmy, what do you think?" said Jabez, as he hurried away to catch his train.

Balmy at first was for going to Topweight's and having it out with him. But, as Jabez had pointed out to him, there were several ugly-looking customers hanging round the alley who might possibly belong to the Topweight firm; he thought better of it, and at once left Shoreditch a sadder and—I was going to say a wiser man; but I am sorry to state that Balmy has simply got into a deeper ditch still. He now gets through his princely screw in double quick time by planking it down on his own fancies.



“What’s Bred in the Bone.”

By A GUARD, *Great Eastern Railway.*

OLD Roland, the aged landlord of that well-known hostelry, “The Driver’s Delight,” had once been a driver himself. But Roland had retired from active service and taken the “Delight” when, comparatively speaking, but a young man. But that was when drivers frequently lived in their own houses, and when it was nothing uncommon to find one who owned other houses as well. Of course, this was a long time ago, when masters were harsh and hours were long. Roland was an old chap who held some rather eccentric ideas, and was fond of airing them in the little snuggerly behind the bar; an old-fashioned snuggerly, by the way, which had given delight to many a stage coachman as he shook the snow from his whiskers and warmed his chilled hands before its cheerful fire. But that was before the arrival on the scene of the coachmen who carry their cheerful fires with them on the road. One of Roland’s ideas was that wrong-doing was hereditary. No matter, said he, whether the descendants of a bad one are born in hovel or palace, it always works out the same. In the one case law and order are openly set at defiance; in the other the evildoer’s deeds are glossed over for a time by rich friends, who shrink from calling his performances criminal, so give them some more sympathetic designation. One regular old-fashioned Christmastide, some time ago, it so happened that Roland, Jack Barclay (a retired police-sergeant), and myself were the only occupants of the little snuggerly. A thick snow was falling outside, and people were loth to turn out. So it appeared likely we should have the evening to ourselves, and so it turned out. Roland made the fire half-way up the chimney, down which a huge flake would descend now and again with a hiss and a splutter, warning us that we were on the best side of the house. Roland hobbled out and presently hobbled in again, hugging tenderly a dusty, cobwebby bottle of port. “Nearly as old as myself,” remarked the old man, “and only comes out once a year, and it’s to drink your health, Jack, my boy.” The old sergeant looked surprised. “Don’t quite understand, eh, Barclay, old friend? Well, Joe, I often wanted to mention it, but thought I had better wait till you were out of the service. So now, if you don’t mind my airing my hereditary theory, and as things are quiet, to pass away an hour, I’ll recall a little incident of a Christmastide long ago, which I’ll engage is as fresh in your memory as mine, Jack. I know you’ve always stood out that if you train up a child in the way he should go, you need fear nothing for the youngster’s future; but that yarn won’t do for me. See, Jack, I’ve studied that thing closely. I’ve cut out of the newspapers at different times any account of people I

have known who have got into trouble. I've watched them and their children's career as far as possible, and the results of my observation have verified my argument that what's bred in the bone will sooner or later show itself." The old man here pulled open a drawer in a chiffonier at his elbow which was full of old newspaper cuttings. Selecting one yellow with age, he threw it on the table, remarking, "Read that."

I picked it up and read as follows:—"At the E— Assizes an elderly man, named Hiram Ramsay, was sentenced to twenty years' penal servitude for the manslaughter of a woman who had been living with him as his wife since his wife's death. The man, who had a narrow escape of being tried on the capital charge, left two young children, a boy and girl, who are now in the workhouse." The sergeant's generally bright countenance looked unusually serious as I read it out. Reaching over, he picked up the cutting and toyed with it all the while Roland was relating the following:—

"Ramsay I knew well," said Roland. "He was always a bad lot; still, as I was just come into this house, I took the girl from the workhouse and handed her over to the wife to help about the house. The boy, who was much older, I learnt, ran away to sea or somewhere worse, and I doubt not came to some bad end, or will do eventually, as his father did before him. Ah! you smile, Barclay, but I'll wager another bottle of this old port that I'm right, and that's saying something," said the old man, as he lovingly fingered the cobwebs. "Well, I'll take you, Roland, old friend, if ever we find out," said the sergeant. "It'll cost you ten bob, Jack," added Roland, as he continued. "Well, to cut it short, Mary or Polly Ramsay, as she was called, grew into a handsome girl, and, of course, I put her behind the bar. I need not say the business increased considerably. Railwaymen are generally to the fore where a pretty face is in evidence. Perhaps (this with a roguish smile) guards and policemen were a little more forward than others. But in Polly's case it was a young driver who carried off the desired prize. Yes; handsome, good-tempered, good-hearted Hugh Bramber prevailed on Polly to leave us and become the wife of as true and fine a man as ever stood on the footplate of an engine, and that's saying a great deal. But, mind you, it was not without a struggle he gained the day. Running neck and neck with him for Polly's favour was Tom Grayling, a young chap about Hugh's age. But what a contrast there was between the two men! How the girl could have looked at Grayling with Hugh Bramber to her hand was always a wonder to most of us except myself. But I knew the poor girl's pedigree, and wondered not at her fancy for the 'ne'er-do-weel,' for Grayling was one of those chaps who hang about a public-house from morn till eve, never seem to do any work, yet always seem to be flush of money. How they get it is always something of a mystery. Well, this was the sort of scamp that hung around Polly till she, to the joy of my missus and all her real friends, got married to Hugh Bramber. All thought everything was going to run

like a well-oiled locomotive after that. I say all, but I knew Polly's wayward disposition, I had watched her liking for sundry small nips on the quiet, and, more than all, I did not forget her shady descent. So when people began to gossip and wag their heads knowingly, and that infernal scamp, Grayling, was seen about the town in Polly's company during Bramber's absence of two or three days on long trips, I was, perhaps, less surprised—though none the less pained—than anyone. But Hugh—good-hearted, unsuspecting Hugh—took no heed of what he termed the jealous talk of old women. But I saw things were getting worse, and presently the crash came. Ah! Barclay, I see you begin to recollect the affair. I'll say no more if you wish it." "No! no! Go on, Roland; it's beyond the recollection of most about here now, and our friend here can be trusted, I know," said the sergeant, indicating myself.

"'Twas just such weather as this that Christmas morning, and having had a busy Christmas Eve, I did not intend to turn out quite as early as usual. But, as it happened, I had to get up earlier. It was about five o'clock that I heard someone rattling and shaking the bar door like a madman. I pulled on my things and ran down. I'd no sooner opened the door than in rushed Hugh Bramber. 'Now, Roland, look sharp, fill this bottle with brandy; Polly's taken mortal queer.' 'All right, Hugh, my boy,' says I, as I filled up the bottle. I was surprised to see Hugh, as I knew he was booked away early that morning with a special goods to the North. I said as much. 'Cancelled—didn't run,' said Hugh, hurriedly, at the same time laying a coin on the counter. He was bolting off, when I called him back to take the change. 'No change out of a shilling,' says he. 'This is a sovereign you gave me,' I said. 'Never had such a thing about me,' said he, putting his hand into his pocket again. 'Why, here's another one, confound it! Why, this isn't my coat!' I looked at it, and said, 'No'; and then added, without thinking, 'Why, it looks more like Tom Grayling's.' The words had no sooner left my lips than I felt sorry I spoke. White as death grew that strong, honest face; the bottle dropped from his quivering hand; then, without a word, he turned and shot out of the door. In a moment the whole thing had become clear to him as it had to me. Comment is needless. Hugh had come home before he was expected. For an instant I hardly knew what to do; then, catching up my cap, I slipped out after him. Hugh's house was not more than two hundred yards from the "Delight." I saw him plunging along through the snow, which was quite a foot deep. Then suddenly he pulled up short. Coming from the opposite direction was Grayling. His head was bent down; it was evident he did not see Hugh till close upon him. What was said I was not close enough to hear. I only saw Bramber tear off the coat from his back, and hurl it at Grayling. There was a tussle—it was a short one. The weak-kneed, besotted scamp was no match for the muscle, sinew, and nerve of the driver, with right on his side. Straight as a bar of iron his arm shot out, and

Grayling sank back like a log in the snow. A thrill of satisfaction shot through me and warmed my veins like a hot draught. No thought for the scoundrel, who lay as if dead in the snow, crossed my mind. I thought for the moment no one but myself witnessed the incident, till, glancing across the street, I saw the light shine on a policeman's face, all aglow with the same light of satisfaction that I knew was lighting my own countenance. But he made no movement in Grayling's direction. On the contrary, he turned on his heel the other way about. I came back—said nothing to anyone. Later on I heard that Grayling had been picked up and taken to the hospital, where he remained some time, but wisely kept a still tongue in his head. Slipped and hit his head against the kerb was his explanation. Bramber was missing, too; in fact, he has never been seen in the district since. Several drivers about that time left for the Colonies, and Hugh, I have reason to believe, was one of them. The last news I heard of Polly Bramber is contained in a newspaper cutting in the drawer here, to the effect that she was nearly beaten to death in a common lodging-house by a man who answered Grayling's description in every particular. And, now, sergeant," said Roland, with a smile, "we'll open this, old chap, and drink to the memory of the constable who that Christmas morning shirked his duty, as it were, by standing back, while one man pounded another to a jelly, whereby that man might have lost his life." "Yes, Roland, my boy," said the sergeant; "and when this bottle's done, as there seems to be more fungus than wine in it, we'll have in the other on our wager. If you say I'm to pay, why, I'll pay. Whether I'm liable or not I'll leave to you; but I know now I was the last Ramsay who ran away from the workhouse, and after knocking about at several jobs joined the police in my present name, and was drafted into this district just in time to become acquainted with Bramber, and to know the sterling man he was. But to this evening I never knew the rights of my family history, or that the man who scurried away that Christmas morn was you, Roland. If you will kindly allow me, Roland, old friend, I'll put this piece of family history in the fire." "Certainly, Jack, certainly," said the old man, whose face was a study during Barclay's statement. Jack then placed the yellow cutting between the bars; the flame roaring up the chimney, caught it, and curled up the retired police-officer's pedigree in a twinkling. Roland hobbled away and fetched the other bottle. "I'll acknowledge I've well lost, Jack," said he, as he lingered over drawing the cork; "but mind you, I've often wondered how it was that such a strict officer as you always were should have departed from duty's path so willingly that morning. But I know now, Barclay, old chum; you couldn't help it." 'Twas bred in the bone."

Cantankerous Passengers.

BY A TICKET COLLECTOR, *Great Northern Railway.*

WHEN I asked for an appointment as ticket collector I anticipated very pleasant times indeed. In fact, next to being a stationmaster, I thought ticket collecting would be a very desirable occupation. I altered my opinion in less than a month after receiving the coveted position. At my first station, besides being ticket collector, I was parcels porter, luggage porter, shunter, and, by way of variety, used to help load up churns of milk. But in addition to this, I had entirely overlooked the obnoxious individuals mentioned in the title of this paper. However, that little mistake was shortly afterwards rectified. I very soon came into contact with one of the class of persons who seem to take a delight in making the lives of the platform staff a burden. The gentleman (?) I refer to arrived at our station, and alighted from a compartment in which one of the windows had been broken. I was asked by the guard of the train to get this man's name and address. He had just left the station, so I went after him, and requested the required information. "What do you want with my name and address?" he queried. I replied, "A window has been broken in the compartment in which you travelled, and a report of the circumstances will have to be made." "I didn't break it, and you won't get my name," he snapped out. I explained it would be necessary to detain him unless he gave the information asked for. At that he went into a towering passion, and threatened to knock my brains out if I attempted to stop him. As he was a powerful fellow, and I had only just recovered from a serious illness, I did not half like the look of things. He stood over me in a fighting attitude, while I leant against a fence, and stared him in the face, trying my best not to look alarmed. I don't think it was a very successful attempt, but I managed to brass it out until assistance arrived. Then our "friend," finding himself cornered, deluged us with a choice selection of Billingsgate, gave a name and address, and took himself off. The address turned out to be false, and although I kept a sharp look-out, I never saw him again. The following amusing incident occurred at another station. On this occasion I was asked to speak to a man who was kicking up a row in the booking office. This fellow was having a row with the booking clerk, which originated in a mistake about some tickets. I went to speak to him, and found he had taken off his coat to fight the clerk. After taking stock of him, I concluded it would be better to get assistance, so I called the foreman porter. Now our foreman was, in his own estimation, a bit of a "chucker out." I had often heard him express an opinion that anyone kicking up a row on the station while he was about would make a big mistake: so evidently he was just the sort of man required in this case. Just as he came

upon the scene a train, which it was my duty to collect, ran into the station. Our valiant foreman marched into the booking office with a look that would have done credit to Ajax defying the lightning; but, before I could say "Jack Robinson," he came rushing out, and said to me, "Look after him, D—; I will collect the down train for you." Then he bolted off, leaving me to tackle a fellow nearly twice as big as myself, alone. Fortunately it did not come to hostilities, for the individual in question cooled down, and went on to the platform to wait for his train. Since that little affair I "wink the other eye" when I hear the foreman talk about "chucking out." The people who give us most trouble are over-carried passengers. They are generally, in their own estimation, very much to be pitied, inasmuch as a "fool of a guard" or a "jackass of a porter" has misdirected them, and they usually threaten to report to the Superintendent, who, strange to say, often happens to be a personal friend. It is my private opinion, based on a long experience, that half the people who travel by this line have, at least, a nodding acquaintance with our Superintendent. Late one night a passenger got off a down train with a ticket for the last station at which the train had stopped. As the last up train had gone, he had to walk back. As usual in these sort of cases, I demanded the excess fare, but was told I would be sent to a very warm place before I should get it. Name and address were then asked for, but that was also refused, in language more forcible than polite. Persuasion and argument having failed, a policeman was sent for, but before he arrived the passenger volunteered to accompany me to the police station. When we got there the sergeant took him in hand, but did not fare any better than myself. Our friend failing to behave himself, a P.C. was ordered to take him to the charge-room, and then the fun commenced. There was a desperate struggle for a few minutes, and the P.C. was gradually getting his man towards the charge-room door, when the sergeant thought he might as well lend a hand, so he proceeded to lift the man from behind. The result was a trifle startling, for both men, losing their balance, disappeared into the dark recesses of the charge-room with a crash, the poor P.C. being underneath. Our passenger was not hurt, but the constable presented a very gory appearance, having sustained a severe cut on his neck. By this time the police officials had fairly lost their tempers, and for the next few minutes they gave our man a very rough time of it indeed. That seemed to bring him to his senses, for he soon caved in, and apologised for the trouble he had caused, paid the fare, shook hands all round, and took himself off. I think at the finish, he was glad enough to get away. On another occasion a half-drunken passenger was over-carried by the last train down one Sunday night. He paid the excess fare, and was directed the way to walk back. Shortly after, when going off duty, I found this individual waiting for me in the street. With threats he demanded his money and his ticket back. I told him if he didn't clear off I would run him in. However, he persisted in following me, asking for his ticket and money back, and threatening

vengeance if he did not get them. I took no further notice of him until I got home, when he attempted to follow me indoors. I thought that a trifle beyond a joke, so I went for him; and after a tussle, my too attentive friend found himself in the road, and the gate shut against him. As I was closing the door he was attempting to climb the palisading. Finding I had got safely inside, he used some language not exactly parliamentary, and decidedly not complimentary to myself. Having thus relieved his feelings, he lumbered off, leaving me to retire to rest in peace. This is a sample of the people who sometimes put themselves in evidence at a railway station. Seeing that "all sorts and conditions of men" are continually passing in and out of our busy stations, it is not to be wondered at that occasionally we have to deal with some rough customers.

Railway Anecdotes.

BY A GOODS CLERK, *Midland Railway.*

I AM indebted for the principal anecdotes in this paper to a work entitled "Our Iron Roads," published in 1852, and also an article in the *Fortnightly Review* entitled "Railway Revolutions," both of which are from the pen of a Midland Railway official, whose experience of railway life has been not only exceptionally long, but wonderfully varied.

It is amusing to recall, while the memory of the phenomenal times achieved in the recent railway race to Scotland is fresh in our minds, that the "new and improved" style of travel between Edinburgh and London in 1754 was thus advertised in the Edinburgh newspapers for that year:—"The London and Edinburgh stage coach, for the better accommodation of passengers, will be altered to a new genteel two-end glass coach-machine, hung on steel springs, exceedingly light and easy; it will perform the journey in 10 days during the summer, and 12 days in winter."

Another staggering item is that during the prevalence of the railway mania in 1845 the astounding sum of £100,000 a week was spent in advertising the new lines.

Amongst anecdotes innumerable about the swindling of railway companies by landowners through whose property the lines ran, we learn that at least one honest man was met with. An ancestor of the editor of *Truth* made an agreement with the Eastern Counties Company for a passage through his estate near Chelmsford, the price being £35,000. His son and suc-

cessor, the Right Honourable Henry Labouchere, finding that the property was not deteriorated to the anticipated extent, returned £15,000.

Amongst the various strange devices adopted by the promoters of railways for the purpose of choking off opposition to their schemes, the following deserves a first place:—

“In a certain midland county, the facts and arguments of an editor were wielded with such vigour that the opposing company found it necessary to adopt extraordinary means. Bribes were offered, but refused; an opposition paper was then started, but its conductors quailed before the energy of their opponent, and it produced little effect. Every scheme that ingenuity could devise and money carry out was attempted, but they successively and utterly failed. At length a director hit on a truly Machiavellian plan—he was introduced to the proprietor of the journal, whom he cautiously informed that he wished to risk a few thousands in newspaper property, and actually induced his unconscious victim to sell the property unknown to the editor. When the bargain was concluded the plot was discovered; but it was then too late, and the wily director took possession of the copyright of the paper and the printing office on behalf of the company. The services of the editor, however, were not to be bought; he refused to barter away his independence, and retired, taking with him the respect of both friends and enemies.”

Rather unscrupulous, also, was the method adopted by the directors of a certain line in order to ascertain the efficacy of detonating signals. One of these was fixed to the rails without the knowledge of the driver and stoker, and the amusing result was that on the arrival of the train both these officials were found to be in a state of the greatest alarm, in consequence of a supposed attack having been made upon them by an assassin who, they said, laid down beside the line and deliberately fired at them.

With our long experience that railways bring not only convenience, but prosperity, to towns, we can scarcely realise the feeling which inspired the citizens of Northampton who compelled the London and Birmingham line to change its intended route through Northampton, and to keep at a respectful distance, lest, said some of the worthies of that town, the wool of the sheep should be injured by the smoke of the locomotives.

Nowadays, when Government interference causes the language of directors and managers to be “frequent, and painful, and free,” the following remarks, written nearly a half-century ago, are not without significance:—

“There are some who have gone so far as to say that the State has systematically practised oppressive taxation and unjust interference with the management of railways, in order to paralyse their energies and to reduce their dividends, that they may thus be enabled to buy up the deteriorated property of shareholders; while others have denied this accusation on the ground that it presupposed a degree of sagacity which the Government has never yet evinced, combined with a degree of injustice of which it is incapable.”

The concluding sentence was possibly intended to be taken with the proverbial "grain of salt."

No collection of railway anecdotes could be considered complete without some reference to George Stephenson, "the father of railways."

It is recorded that he once, in reply to a lady who questioned him as to his experience of life, said, "Why, madam, they used to call me George Stephenson; I am now called George Stephenson, Esquire, of Tapton House, near Chesterfield. I have dined with Princes, Peers, and Commoners—with persons of all classes from the humblest to the highest. I have dined off a red-herring, when seated in a hedge-bottom, and I have gone through the meanest drudgery. I have seen mankind in all its phases, and the conclusion I have arrived at is this: that if we were all stripped there is not much difference."

Good old George, while heaving out this chunk of philosophy, apparently quite forgot that his illustration was not exactly the happiest he could have selected in order to impress a lady.

In fact, George Stephenson never appears to have sorted his language very carefully. Take, as another specimen, an anecdote which I will give in the exact words of the *Fortnightly Review*:—

"When it was mentioned to a certain eminent railway authority that George Stevenson had spoken of sending coals by railway, 'Coals!' he exclaimed, 'they will want us to carry dung next!' The remark was reported to 'Old George,' who was not behind his critic in the energy of his expressions. 'You tell B——,' he said, 'that when he travels by railway they carry dung now.'"

Undoubtedly "George" had a temper of his own, and perhaps it was as well for him that his official position allowed him to indulge it without the fear of awkward results.

It is pretty certain if he had occupied a humbler post on the railway, the indulgence of temper would have been a forbidden luxury.

I have already occupied the usual space allotted to an article, but must beg for a few more lines, in order to quote a final anecdote, which goes to prove that "temper" is looked upon as something to be kept well under control by ordinary railway-men.

A huge, rough navvy came on one occasion to an assistant engineer of one of the western lines, and, evidently greatly excited by some injury he had suffered, concluded his complaint by the blunt and angry inquiry whether such treatment "was not enough to raise anybody's temper." The engineer availed himself of the word, and replied by asking, with the inquiring air of a person who had heard for the first time of such a thing as "a temper," or as if he thought it was a savage animal which was dangerous to society and to himself, asked, "Temper—temper? What's that? Do you mean to say you keep a temper?"

The navvy was not apt at a definition, and wondering at seeing his master "make great eyes," as the French say, was silent.

"Do you mean to say," continued the engineer, "that you

keep a temper? I know I don't, for I can't afford it, and so I always leave it at home in the morning before I come to work, or it would be always getting me into trouble." The navy received this quietly, was evidently fast cooling, and at length replied, "Well, sir, I suppose it's no use saying nothing, for if you can't afford to get out of temper, I suppose I can't." And he quietly and respectfully trudged off to his work.

One Christmas Day.

· BY A TICKET COLLECTOR, *Great Western Railway.*

MANY years ago I had a friend, a very dear friend, truthful and honest; we were schoolfellows together, studied the same books, enjoyed the same sports, and when the time came to part, as, owing to a great monetary trouble overtaking my parents, I had to leave the dear old school, whilst he, being blessed with a great deal of this world's riches, remained to finish his education, being destined for a colonial career, I, alas! after repeated failures, tried railway life, and liking it, have remained. I, being the eldest, felt it very much; but we were destined to meet again twice alive, and once when he was no more.

As I am writing this there stands before me a novel tobacco jar made of the foot of a young elephant; the external skin is black and polished, and the toe-nails have been scraped till they are like ivory. It is lined with a cedar-wood box, has a carved ebony lid, and has held some choice tobacco. It was the night before Christmas Eve. I was on the platform at Oxford assisting to load the brakes with luggage for the West of England. It was the night express, and a good many folk were going to spend their holidays with their friends in the west. After the express had departed, I turned about to remove a large deal case and two portmanteaux to the centre of the platform, to await their owner, when I became aware that I was closely watched by a tall gentleman of about 22 or thereabouts, a good 6ft. 1in. in height, and bronzed by exposure to a tropical sun.. He approached and claimed the articles, still gazing fixedly at me.

Where had I seen those features? At last he came towards me and asked, "Were ever you at school at I——?"

"Yes, I was. Are you——?"

"Why, J., old boy, is it you? Is this what your dreams of foreign travel have come to—a railwayman?"

"Yes; I must do something or starve. I have chosen the lesser of the two evils."

"Well, get those things on my trap outside. I live at—— Grange, six miles from here. When are you done? You must come home with me. What! two more hours? I must see the

stationmaster. I will use my influence to get you off the day after to-morrow."

In the meantime I had taken the articles claimed by him and put them on his trap. He had seen the inspector, and with a little persuasion he had agreed to let me off for that night. And we adjourned to the smoking-room of the Railway Hotel to talk over old times. He having been to India, had now come to settle down in his old home. He told me of his hunting exploits, his adventures, etc., and before he went he opened one of the port-manteaux and gave me the tobacco jar in question. He also said he would use his utmost endeavours to get me off on the Christmas Day, to spend it with him at his home.

"Good-night, old man."

A hearty handshake. I opened my hand to see a couple of shining gold pieces reposing therein.

Christmas Eve dawned. I was at my duty early, and just saw a glimpse of my old friend as he journeyed up to see the district superintendent to endeavour to get me leave of absence the next day.

The early part of the day was busy; the usual bustle and excitement pertaining to holiday time; old ladies losing their luggage, and oftentimes themselves. At about midday I had a wire to the effect that my leave was granted.

"Well," I thought, "I shall spend a happy day to-morrow."

That wish was destined never to be fulfilled, for a few hours afterwards we had tidings of the terrible accident at Shipton, the breaking of a wheel, throwing almost the whole train over and wrecking it. Several of us had to go to assist. Never shall I forget the scene: the overturned coaches, the groans of the dying and the injured, the fitful glare of the fires, the howling wind, the wintry surroundings, all conducted to a scene that put one in mind of the great work of Dante.

After hours of the sickening scene I left to return home, tired out, wet through to the skin, smoke begrimed and dirty. I no more resembled a dapper railwayman than chalk was like cheese, as the saying is; but, however, home I go, ill-prepared for the news there awaiting me, which was to go to — Grange, the residence of my friend.

"Whatever can be up?" thought I. But I got ready as soon as possible, had a mouthful of something to eat, and away I trudged on my weary six-mile walk; it was late, and I could not get a conveyance, and the last train was gone; not even a goods; besides, the road was blocked at Shipton.

At length I arrived at my destination, and was struck by the strange stillness about the place, the solemnity with which the servants went about their duties. A foreboding of evil struck me, and when I was ushered into his room it was some moments before I realised I had heard his cheery voice for the last time. His mother, a stately woman with silvery hair, was kneeling by his bed, grief-stricken to the last degree. She told me that he was in the fated train, was one of the first rescued alive, but terribly injured; he was at once brought to his home. The doctor gave

small hope of his recovery, and he expired four hours before I arrived there. I shall never forget it. I looked down at the dear dead face with all the nameless weariness and sense of injustice that comes over one at such a time.

If brilliant prospects, troops of friends, wealth, love, and all the rest that makes this life worth living could ensure happiness, they were his.

The day was just dawning (Christmas Day ; what a contrast to the one I expected!), the glory of the rising sun was showing through the trees, tinging the snow-covered branches with a glorious rosy light ; before the windows, in snowy grandeur, lay the grounds of the Grange ; a few birds were twittering ; before me Nature's passive luxuriance, behind me Nature's grim irony.

I pass over the concluding scenes of that Christmas Day, which are indelibly stamped on my memory. I reached home at last, and a short time afterwards I asked for and obtained a shift to another station, and left the place which engenders such painful memories.

Miss Araminta Brown's First Railway Trip.

BY A NUMBER-TAKER, *Midland Railway.*

IT was a quiet little town where Miss Araminta Brown resided—a regular old-fashioned country town. She had lived there all her life, and had never dared to venture from the place. She seemed to belong wholly to it, and would have been as much out of place and as useless as the detached hands of a clock elsewhere. She was not beautiful. Oh, no! Nothing like a modern Venus. On the contrary, she was lean and scraggy, with a sharp, long nose, goggle eyes, and red hair ; not at all prepossessing was Araminta Brown. Perhaps that accounted for the fact that she was still unmarried. She was inflated to bursting pitch with vanity, and thought her masculine acquaintances uncommonly backward, even lacking in sentiment, inasmuch as they had not been carried away by her many imagined charms. One womanly accomplishment she was not short of (what woman is?) that was the use of her tongue. She could talk from morning to night without ceasing, and, as she lived by herself, would talk to the cat for hours. Poor cat!

Now, Miss Araminta Brown had a distant relative in London, and she conceived an idea of paying this relative a visit. I do not know what could have put the idea into her head. The mind takes strange flights sometimes ; but there it was. The idea grew and grew, until she at last resolved to put it into execution. One bright morning saw Miss Araminta making vast preparations for her journey—the

first trip she had ever made behind the iron horse. The neighbours were quite taken by surprise to see her going off with luggage enough to last an Arctic explorer for twelve months, and many were the comments passed. She reached the station, and in a state of bewilderment bordering on hopeless insanity, stood gazing round. The porters relieved her at last, and when the train rushed into the station and came to a standstill, she was placed in a compartment, her luggage was duly stowed away, and the train despatched. The porter had been very careful to impress upon her the necessity of changing at a certain station which formed a junction with the main line. She had got the name fixed in her brain, but the wonders of that journey caused her to forget it. The consequence was that after travelling past the station for close upon an hour, the train stopped at a station where tickets were examined. She was got out of the train, and put right for going back; in her excitable condition she quite forgot her luggage, and was soon speeding back to the junction without it. All she carried with her was a small hand-bag, which contained, amongst a few other things, her purse, which was pretty well stocked. Even if she had thought of her luggage she would not have troubled, but would have doubtless thought it was all right and bound to follow her, though she went to the end of the world. It would take too long to describe the many adventures of Araminta Brown during that (her first and last) journey to the great city; how she persisted in getting wrong, and was always put right, only to fall into difficulties again; how she at last met a gentlemanly-looking man, to whom she recounted the whole of her trouble and adventures, and who kindly offered to see her right, as he was going to London himself; how she fell violently in love with him before the journey was ended, and how she discovered that, whilst he had been flattering her and making her blind with vanity, he had succeeded in emptying the contents of her hand-bag and transferring the said contents to his own capacious pockets; how she arrived at last, minus luggage and money, miserable and deceived, at her destination; how she vowed that she "never! never!" would stray away from home again when she once arrived back there, and how she would never place any confidence or trust in any wretched male creature again. "The brutes, the unfeeling villains, the—the—the——"; and then hysteria came on, and sundry bottles containing smelling salts, "pick-me-ups," brandy, etc., vinegar rags, cold water rags, and sundry other restoratives, came into immediate requisition. Oh! what a day that distant relative had! What blessings were heaped upon the unfortunate Araminta's head! And oh! Araminta, if ever thou art tempted to stray from thy native pastures any more; if ever thou art enticed to patronise one of the most mysterious of modern mysteries to the uninitiated—a railway train, then, oh! female, never travel alone and unprotected; not that thy charms are many, but that thy rustic simplicity is abundant and easy to perceive. And oh! most injured of women, if ever thou shouldst travel alone, then never, no, never place any reliance or trust in that horrid creature—man.

Our Guards.

BY A PASSENGER GUARD, *Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.*

ONE of your contemporaries recently described the railway guards of this country as the most courteous, polite, and obliging class of men to be found anywhere, greatly superior in this respect to their *confrères* on the Continent. This unflinching disposition to oblige, it added, might be in anticipation of favours to come. There is, no doubt, some truth in the latter remark, but in justice to the guards it ought not to be inferred that this is the only motive which prompts their affability, or that they are so mercenary as to be in a state of perpetual expectation for every service rendered. The men know that if they wish to retain their situations and perform their duties with credit to themselves—not to mention the hope entertained by many of future promotion—they must be ever courteous and conciliatory towards the public, for a well-founded complaint of incivility is regarded as a very serious offence, to be punished by fine or reduction in rank. Hence this commendable habit is regarded in the light of a duty, and as such is cultivated as much to give satisfaction to the public and the authorities at headquarters as from any hope of pecuniary gain.

The position of guard is not the sinecure often imagined by those not well acquainted with railway work. He must be at the station from which he has to start in ample time to see that his train is properly cleaned, marshalled, and coupled together; that all luggage is loaded in the proper vans and compartments, take charge of the mail bags, and compare all booked parcels with the waybills to see that they are correct. He must answer all questions as to the best route, where to change, time of arrival at particular stations in a courteous and obliging manner, and attend to the comfort of passengers generally.

The journey once commenced, he must see that everything in his van is placed in station order, so as to be in readiness for the respective stations to which articles are addressed. Should an accident occur he must endeavour to allay the fears of the passengers, render all assistance possible to the injured (if any), and take measures for the protection of his own train and any other which might be endangered by approaching on the opposite line. His first consideration being for the safety of the train, he must keep a good look-out, especially when approaching important stations and junctions, and should the driver disregard the signals the guard must make use of the power at his command to stop the train.

There is an impression prevailing among some railwaymen that the introduction of continuous automatic brakes under the

control of the driver has freed the guard from responsibility in this respect; that all he has to do is to look after parcels and luggage, and note the running of the train. These improved appliances have no doubt relieved him of a considerable amount of manual labour, but they cannot be said to have in any way lessened his responsibility. Should the driver disregard a signal or over-run a platform the first question put to the guard is: "Why did you not apply the brake?" and unless a satisfactory reason can be given the guard is placed in a most serious position. A case in point occurred at Todmorden on this line a few years ago, when a passenger train came into collision with a goods train, through both driver and guard disregarding the signals. When asked why he did not apply the brake, the guard, who admitted seeing the signal at danger, replied, "I thought the driver knew what he was about." Of course such culpable negligence could have but one result—both driver and guard were dismissed from the company's service. With trains fitted with simple vacuum brakes, the responsibility for stopping can rest only with the driver, as the only power at the command of the guard is the hand brake upon the van. His position is something like that of a captain whose ship has lost its rudder in a storm and is being driven upon the rocks. The captain sees his danger, he knows that his vessel is hastening to its doom, but the absence of the rudder makes him powerless to prevent the catastrophe.

In addition to these various duties, the guard has at times to deal with numerous eccentric and fidgety individuals, who seem to delight in making themselves as troublesome as possible wherever they go. The two middle-aged ladies who have recently read in the newspapers about an outrage upon the railway, and are consequently rather nervous, would be so much obliged if the guard would get a compartment labelled "Ladies only;" the crotchety passenger who declines to have his ticket examined except at a distance, and will not give it up when requested, telling the officials to take it from him at their peril. There is also the fussy old gentleman who is continually putting his head out of the window to know why the train is so long there, how far is it to the next station, etc. *Apropos* of the latter individual, a good story was told not long ago at a guards' dinner, and as it bears upon this subject, will perhaps bear repetition. It was a train going from Leeds to the North. The fussy old gentleman put his head out of the window at every station and asked if they had arrived at Batley Carr. So, to keep him quiet at last, the guard promised to inform him when they reached that station. However, the guard forgot his promise, and was only reminded of it after he had started the train. He stopped it again and ran to the old gentleman, telling him he was at Batley Carr, and must alight at once. The old man began to fumble in his waistcoat pocket, and the guard, with visions of a sixpence, got on to the step to assist the old man. The latter continued to fumble, and as the sixpence did not appear, or the ancient individual move, the official became impatient and told him he should have to start the train and take

him on. "Oh!" said the old gentleman, "I don't want to get out here; I have got a digestive lozenge in my pocket which my wife told me to take when I got to Batley Carr. Would you mind feeling in my pocket to see if you can find it? I can't." The feelings of that guard as he gave the signal to proceed can be better imagined than described.

Nervous Passengers.

BY A PASSENGER GUARD, *London and North Western Railway.*

THE majority of railwaymen would doubtless dread the entrance of nervous passengers into the arena of railway life were it not for the ludicrous mishaps—some of them purely imaginary—which are continually occurring to them while exhibiting that nervous agitation to which they are subject.

The life of the average railway employé, considering the disadvantages under which he labours—viz., those of short pay and long hours—has not much to commend it as an occupation to be followed by an ambitious man. We could easily excuse him, under these conditions, did he take a pessimistic view of things in general; but the risible faculties of men are hard to control at times, and therefore he contrives to make life worth living, and manages to derive some slight amusement from the vagaries of those nervous members of the travelling community. I do not wish it to be inferred from this that the feelings of railwaymen are utterly callous, for they have seldom been found wanting in true sympathy when they have been called upon to give assistance to mere wrecks of humanity, whose sufferings from extreme nervous debility were such as to incapacitate them both mentally and physically.

As I do not propose, however, to write a treatise on nervous debility, but only to give a little of my experience of the many peculiarities of our nervous passengers, I will proceed, with caution, to pass them in review again upon the railway stage for the benefit of your readers. A wave of the magic wand, and round the nearest corner rushes a woman with her arms full of various packages, and a wild look in her eyes!—a look which bodes ill for the comfort of the railway official or facetious cabman who may think this is a suitable moment for a little "chaff." This is the woman who invariably turns up at the station in a fever of excitement about an hour before the train is due out, and proceeds to harass the porters with innumerable questions as to

when and where her train leaves. She rushes about from platform to platform under the impression that the men have, for some reason of their own, wilfully misled her; then, at the last moment, she finds the right train, and is unceremoniously bundled into a compartment with a sigh of relief from the porter which might be heard a long distance off. By the time that she has been satisfactorily disposed of, the next one is ready for an introduction; this is also a woman. (It will perhaps be no digression to state here that I have usually found the ranks of nervous passengers are chiefly filled by the members of the weaker sex; although it would be altogether inexplicable did not the "lords of creation" help to increase the number.) Having purchased her ticket, she spends most of the time before the train is due out in running between the compartment she has selected and the guard's van, where, in nervous trepidation, she inquires after the safety of the squalling parrot she has been compelled to leave there. She then gives strict injunctions to the guard to render special attention to the "dear bird," the "dear bird" in the meanwhile filling the air with profane utterances. On being assured that all is well she takes her seat to await the departure signal only to start up in haste as the ticket-examiner appears at the door demanding the tickets. She makes a hurried search through her various belongings, only to find ticket and purse both missing; but as she is quite certain that they were in her possession when she entered the compartment, she insinuatingly remarks that they must be there now, only in another person's pocket. Another official, however, comes up at this moment with the missing property, which had been dropped in the booking-office, and "our lady," snatching the purse out of his hand, renders a scant apology to all, and rushes to another compartment, looking rather crestfallen.

Later on in the day a kind, motherly-looking old lady appears on the scene; nervous she certainly is, but her nervousness appears to arise solely from her lack of knowledge in matters pertaining to railways. It is evident to the practised eye that this must be about the first time she has ever travelled in a railway train. She sits on the extreme edge of the seat, and from the manner in which she glances at her surroundings, she seems to be in momentary expectation that the train will prove to be some modern instrument of warfare, calculated to blow up or go off in a given time. Two or three fog-signals exploding, where some repairs are going on in close proximity to the train, cause the old lady to jump out on the platform, and make for the entrance to the station, under the delusion that her worst fears are about being realised; but on seeing that no damage has resulted from the explosion, she regains her courage and again enters the train. It will perhaps be as well, before leaving the subject, just to give one specimen of the nervous male passenger, and to do so we will view him on the arrival platform.

Stalking majestically along the platform comes Mrs. Brown and her three bouncing daughters; they are not at all nervous—oh, dear, no!

They appear to be too strong-minded for that, and I should

say suitable members for a "woman's rights" society. When you come to look closer you will perceive, almost hidden amongst the voluminous folds of the ladies' dresses, a miserable-looking little man, who is now dragged forth into the light of day to await orders.

This is John Brown, Esq., as he is styled in his epistolatory correspondence; not the late J—— B——, the ever-lamented, but another John Brown of that ilk. To his "better-half" he is simply—John; and at the present moment, as he proceeds to fulfil the orders received under that title, he appears to be, to the spectator, nothing but a man-servant, instead of the head of the household, and, as such, a British taxpayer.

If you listen, too, to the severe comments of his fair daughters as to the ludicrous appearance which "pa" presents while nervously sorting their luggage from the heap, you will not feel at all surprised to know that he has long been a martyr to nervous prostration. And no wonder!

English Railway Travelling compared with American.

BY A FOREMAN, *Midland Railway.*

IN comparing the two systems of railway travelling I will endeavour, as far as possible, to write with fairness on the advantages and disadvantages of each. In the first place the palm of victory falls to the lot of our English railways, for perfection of permanent way, speed of trains, better signalling, and above all, greater punctuality. But with regard to the rolling stock, America may be said to out-distance us in style, convenience, ease, and comfort. In the matter of booking, their system is preferable to ours, as a ticket can be purchased some days in advance, thus saving much of the annoyance too often experienced by the English travelling public. The platforms of an American station do not present the state of confusion so often seen at home; this is attributable to their rule never to allow passengers on the platform unless in possession of a ticket, and not then until five minutes before starting time.

The trains usually consist of from six to ten long cars, all on what is termed the bogie principle; they are fitted with every comfort and convenience, and the ease and freedom of travelling is far superior to our own. It is often a matter of wonder and remark from our American cousins when visiting England that the English public do not clamour for reform in our primitive mode of carrying living freight from city to city.

The cry of the few that privacy is not secured in the American cars stands for nothing. What privacy is there in the English compartment system? Does one passenger have a compartment to himself? If by any means he enters one alone, what is there to hinder some villain from entering at the next stopping-place, unless the compartment is reserved? In this case you are entirely at his mercy, except for the communication between passenger and guard—a communication at such a time practically useless; a villain bent on foul work would take care you did not reach the cord, which would be an easy matter. Then where are your means of escape?

Far different with our American cousin; he can move to another car if the company is objectionable, as the cars open at each end, and a communication exists from end to end of a train. In hot weather each car is provided with a supply of pure iced water, an acceptable drink on a hot, dry journey. In the winter the cars are nicely heated; every convenience in the shape of lavatories, etc., is also provided. What is more comforting than a good wash on a long tedious journey? The American traveller leaves the cars clean, tidy, and feeling as if he were presentable to friends who may have come to meet him. Contrast this with the English system. The traveller at home, if on a long journey in hot weather, is parched with thirst and dust-begrimed. If in winter, on arriving at his destination, it takes some time to pull himself together, and an almost superhuman effort to straighten his cramped limbs, and to crawl from beneath his numerous wraps and rugs. The traveller in America experiences none of the above inconveniences, and the antiquated foot-warmer is a thing unknown, except by visitors to our country. During the journey the conductor is constantly moving about the train, examining or collecting tickets, or giving some information to passengers, or describing the different objects of interest passed on the way. There is no need for any passenger to be over-carried, for immediately a station is left the conductor announces the name of the next stopping-place.

One thing that strikes the English traveller is the entire absence of station porters, and the freedom from confusion on entering and leaving trains; this is due in a great measure to the system of checking baggage. This system to a very great degree prevents the loss of passengers' personal luggage, except through some gross carelessness on the part of the passenger himself. On entering a station your luggage is taken direct to the baggage-room, it is there checked by the clerk, brass checks with the destination are attached to each box or parcel, and corresponding ones are handed to the owner; these he retains until his destination is reached; all care or thought of one's luggage ceases from this time, and if on the journey several changes are made, no thought need be taken of them. At your destination the checks are presented at the baggage-room, and your property is handed to you. There is no claiming of lug-

gage, and the necessary confusion so often seen here. I cannot conceive why this system, with its many advantages, could not be adopted here. Its working seems to be straightforward and simple, and I am sure the travelling public would appreciate the change, and, when once adopted, there is no doubt it would prove beneficial to the companies.

Something Strange.

BY A CARRIAGE CLEANER, *Great Central Railway.*

WE were all sitting round the fire in the shanty, for it was a bitter cold day; the frost was so intense as to cause a cessation for the present of all outside work. We had smoked and spoken but little for a good long time, when Bill Robbins broke the silence: "I say, chaps, it is just eight years ago to-day that a queer thing happened, so funny that I cannot account for it at all. If you care to hear the story I will tell it you, for it seems as if it were but yesterday since it occurred, so fresh it seems in my mind. When I first joined the company I started as carriage washer and cleaner, and was appointed to the terminus of Wenton, where I then lived. There were five of us engaged in the occupation of washing—two brothers, nicknamed the 'Curleys,' Dave Stennett, myself, and a fellow named Stevenson. The latter was a queer man, a fellow one could never understand, so erratic were his ways. Perhaps one day he would be all geniality and good nature, another morose and full of evil forebodings. I always thought for my own part that he was somewhat deranged, so very changeable was his temperament and his conversation so very irregular. He believed, or professed to do so, in clairvoyance, or second sight, and had always prognostications of his own death. Many and many a time I have felt my hair gradually rising from my head when he was busy with his talk, all about after death and the invisible world. He professed to believe in spirits, and would often tell us that should anything happen to him, he would come back and visit us, were he permitted. The others used to scoff at these sayings of this strange character, but I must confess that an uncanny feeling would come over me when I heard him talk.

"He lived about three-quarters of a mile from the terminus, lodging with a platelayer named Willis and his wife, who occupied a house close to the level crossing of Crossflatts. In the winter the platelayers did not start work until seven o'clock in the morning, partaking of their breakfasts before they came. We washers started work at six, stopping for breakfast about eight. This being the case, Stevenson generally turned up at

six by himself, walking the distance from Willis's house to the terminus on the line.

"One morning, as I said before, exactly eight years ago this day, when we got to work Stevenson had not turned up. We waited a short time ere we started, thinking he would come, for he, as a rule, was very punctual, and did not like losing time. However, he did not arrive, so we lighted our lanterns and set to work, washing a train without him. There were six coaches on the train, so we started on the platform side, the two men first finished taking the two extras. The two Curleys were the best washers of our party, so they generally finished first. This morning proved no exception to the case, for they were first to finish, and therefore started with extras. I was the next to finish, and so I started with my lamp, bucket, and brush to reach the off platform side. I had jumped from the platform, and was filling my bucket from the water column near to where the train was, when I glanced up, and perceived in the dull, uncertain light Stevenson washing the first coach. I thought there was something very odd in his appearance, for I had not perceived him pass me, and I heard no noise as he plied his brush. Just then Dave Stennett came up and saw Stevenson as well as myself. I saw Dave's face change by the light of our lamps as he perceived Stevenson working away. 'Hallo! when did Stevy turn up?' he said to me in a whisper, as we both stood watching the figure. Throwing off the queer feeling that had come over me, and summoning up courage, trying to laugh off my idle fears, I approached to where Stevy was plying his brush. 'Hallo, Stevy!' I said, 'I did not know that you were here.' He turned round as I spoke, the light from my lamp shining on him. Good God! shall I ever forget the look that he fixed upon me—a look that froze the marrow in my bones! His face was that of a corpse, malignity and evil malice making it Satanic in its intensity. My tongue seemed glued to my mouth; my blood turned to ice. I tried to articulate—to utter some word, but a sentence would not come. I found myself babbling hysterically. I heard a cry, and there was Dave, grovelling at my feet in a fit. At last the reaction came, and I shrieked aloud. Soon the station was in an uproar, explanations ensued, and we were laughed at, Dave and I, for a couple of fools. But here the sequel comes in. When daylight came the body of a man was found, cut to pieces, near to the Crossflatts crossing, which was identified as the missing Stevenson. It appears that he had left home at the usual time, and the morning being rather misty, must have got in the way of a pilot engine, which had run him down and killed him. It must have happened about the same time that I and Dave saw the vision; so that ends my story, which may seem very queer, but is nevertheless true."

Our Engine Drivers.

BY A PASSENGER GUARD, *Hull and Barnsley Railway.*

NO class of men, probably, carry so many lives in their hands as engine-drivers, and, in justice let it be said, the majority of them are true to their trust. But who, riding luxuriously along in his first-class carriage, with his favourite magazine before him, and the beautiful country unrolling its charming panorama of hill and dale before his vision, gives any thought to the hand, grimy with smoke and grease, which controls the regulator and guides the engine on its way? Who thinks of the driver on his engine dashing on through the stormy night, his eye ever fixed on the various signals and on the road before him, his ear watchful for the slightest deviation in the sound of the heavy grind behind him and the monotonous roar beneath him? Who cares whether he is wet, or cold, or tired, so long as the train moves safely and steadily on to its destination? Sitting by our quiet firesides, we read in the papers the too oft-repeated announcement—"Another Railway Accident." We skim it over, and calmly pursue another subject, satisfied that though the driver was the only person killed, it might have been much worse. Only! Do we pause to think how much that word implies? If the driver had not proved true to his trust; if he had not stuck to his engine even unto death, what would have been the fate of the train? Hundreds of lives, perhaps, were saved by that man's death; scores of households were probably kept from desolation by his brave self-abnegation. There are many wives and children saved from mourning to-day because only the driver was killed. The shunters in our busy yards have their lives daily imperilled. Our goods guards and brakemen run tremendous risks in the performance of their hazardous duties. The platelayer, in following his dangerous occupation, is liable to be mowed down at any moment, and the frequency of accidents to the above classes of servants is truly lamentable. After calm consideration of the circumstances responsible for the majority of deaths amongst the classes referred to, we are forced to the conclusion that had a little more care and watchfulness been duly observed, the accident or death might have been avoided. Far different is it with the driver, who is invariably "drawn" into danger through circumstances which he is powerless to prevent. Take a cold, snowy, winter's night; picture a long goods train rushing madly on through space, down steep gradients, round sharp curves, the engine snorting and blowing forth smoke and fire. The guard is sitting round the stove in his van, and is contented, for he is confident that there is a man ahead who will avoid danger if it be possible; and he may be, at the same time, straining every nerve, with a blinding snowstorm in his face, eagerly watching for that light from the signal which controls the running of his

train. But what if he loses his reckoning for one moment, and finds he has already passed the signal which has caused him so much anxiety; what if, to his horror, he discovers that his train is fast gaining speed as it thunders down a long, heavy incline, and he finds his brake powerless to check the train in its mad career? Who can picture him, gazing with horror, fascinated as it were, as he discerns right ahead of him the red lamps of another train on the same line of rails, and for which, if he should hit, he alone would be responsible? What if it be a train crowded with a living freight of humanity? Will he, on the impulse of the moment, desert his engine, and leave it to perform its deadly work without a restraining hand? No! Instances of engine drivers deserting their engines in the moment of danger are, happily, very rare.

The driver has no band of music, no fife and drum to inspire him, only the roar of the wheels over the iron road. In the dark and stormy nights he scents the presence of danger, and, scorning to save himself at the expense of others, he sticks to his engine, and often goes down in the wreck, doing his duty to the last. Who among those he has saved writes poems on his death? Who calls him a hero? Who laments the brave and noble heart beneath the greasy jacket, and lays flowers on the cold breast before the earth covers it and oblivion steals over it? He was only an engine driver, and yet he was a hero; and some of the bravest men that live to-day are piloting our goods and passenger trains, laden with valuable merchandise and precious freights of human souls, and with their lives will they guard the trains committed to their care. All honour to them, and long may they continue (as I believe they are to-day) the bravest set of men the railway service can boast of.



The Fatigue of Metal in Railway Axles.

BY A GATEMAN, *London and North Western Railway.*

I READ with much interest the instructive articles on the breaking of axles, because it touches on a subject that for years I was engaged in the consideration of, viz., "fatigue of metal," and growing or increasing flaws.

The construction of a gun and of an axle may at first sight seem very different, but the strains are the same, although in the one case they are applied from inside, the other from outside. My experience of the fatigue of metal was gained by 12 years' training as an Artilleryman in the School of Gunnery, Royal Arsenal, Gun Factories, etc.

Theoretically considered, there is no part of the locomotive which is so strong, in proportion to the work which it has to perform, as the crank axle of a well-designed engine, and yet cases of failure in this part of the machine are by no means rare, and considering the disastrous results which sometimes follow such failure, it is desirable that every possible precaution should be taken to minimise the number of cases in which crank axles fail when running.

The failure of a crank axle may be brought about by a variety of causes, acting either singly or otherwise, though failure can seldom be ascribed to one particular cause *alone*.

First, there are those internal stresses which must perforce exist in every metallie appliance constructed on such principles as crank axles generally are. Then, again, in addition to the forces brought to bear on the parts by the weight of the engine, and the action of the steam on the pistons, it must be remembered that immense power is exerted by the *pinching* action of the wheels in running over portions of the line laid tight to gauge, intensified by the fact that the wheels act as powerful levers to increase this huge intermitting strain. It has been suggested that this might be remedied by having driving wheels without flanges, but there are very strong objections to this course, while an alternative scheme of turning down thin the flanges of the drivers does not appear to have met with the consideration it seems to deserve. However, that this force does exist to a terrific extent there is no room for doubt, and that it attacks a crank axle in a most destructive manner may be readily conceived. The *pinching* in action of the rails on the flanges at the lower part (for the time being) of the wheels brings about in the axle a tendency to curve slightly upwards in the centre, which, if the axle is well-proportioned, and of a sufficiently elastic material and construction, it actually does, and thus two distinct forces are brought to play as the axle revolves: the one a tearing strain exerted on the top

side of the axle; while on the under side the tendency of the force is to set up a compressing strain, the strains alternating as the axle revolves. If we take a piece of iron, something in the shape of a stair-rod, and holding it with the hands at either end, cause it to curve upwards in the centre, and then suppose it to be revolving rapidly round its longer axis, we may readily understand the treatment to which all axles are subjected when running, and we know that from their conformation such treatment must be specially detrimental to crank axles.

Another cause which contributes to the destruction of crank axles, and of most of the other iron and steel appliances used in railway working, is what is known as *fatigue of metal*. It is well known that axles and other metallic parts of rolling-stock, etc., begin after a time to deteriorate. The fibrous nature of the metal becomes changed, and crystallisation takes place, with a most damaging effect upon its tenacity; and, as the most careful inspection is powerless to detect this change, which is purely of a chemical nature affecting the structural character of metal, it behoves our locomotive friends to give it their most serious consideration, as well as the question whether or not a limit should be placed to the *life* of a crank axle, irrespective of its apparent state at the time that limit is reached. The necessity for adopting this course will be the more readily conceded if it be borne in mind that this *fatigue* or deterioration is brought about by the continuous succession of strains and blows to which railway rolling stock is subjected in travelling at high speed over joints, curves, points, and crossings, and that in so far as axles are concerned, these blows and strains are not minimised by intervening springs as is the case with most of the other parts of the engine.

Considerable difference of opinion seems to exist as to the respective merits of iron and steel as a material for crank axles, but up to the present time the evidence seems to me to be very much in favour of iron, and after making due allowance for the existing craze for substituting steel for iron in our various manufactures, I feel inclined to ask whether the known rigidity of steel crank axles is not a source of danger and damage which will ultimately bring about their disuse?

The hooping of the webs of cranks is a practice which is frequently resorted to in locomotives, and although a hoop may carry a broken web home safely, the application of hoops to webs known, or even suspected, to be defective, is a most dangerous expedient, for at best the hoops are but a poor substitute for a sound web, and this when the fracture chances to take pretty straight across the web, but when the break happens to take place diagonally across the web, in either an upward or downward direction, hoops are of very little service indeed, and are sometimes a source of increased trouble. Hoops, however, may be placed with advantage on new cranks where space will permit.

A Night in the Fog.

A TRUE NARRATIVE.

BY A PLATELAYER, *Great Northern Railway.*

“WELL, Tom, old man, how are you getting on?” was the question I was asked as I was hurrying along one very foggy evening to the railway station, from whence I was to proceed to my post as a fogman. The person who had accosted me so familiarly turned out to be an old school-fellow, whom I had not seen for some considerable time, and now that we had met, I told him I had no time to spare, as I was just called out fogging. He instantly asked me whether he might accompany me, as he was curious to see a real bit of practical fog-signalling. I, of course, only too gladly acceded to his request, and we proceeded to the signal-box together.

“Hallo,” says the signalman, as we open the door of his snug little box, “this is a tight sort of a night, ain’t it? I am glad you have come, though, as the drivers will not come on, because they cannot see the signals at all, so hurry up and get to your post.”

I, of course, was all the time hurrying up, and so off we went to the “home signals,” armed with a hand-lamp and a large packet of fog-signals, or “fogs” as we call them. My friend, who was accompanying me, having had a few falls over wires and point-rods, just to liven him up a bit, we arrived quite safely at the place where I have spent many a long anxious hour; and I immediately found plenty to do.

In the first place, having had a good look at the “indicators” (these are very useful little instruments situated on the ground, and, working with the signal, they tell on a small slot whether the signal is on or off, although the signal arms may be 60 or 80 feet above one’s head), I proceeded with the aid of my hand-lamp to place pieces of white paper, with a large stone upon each, at every place where I intended to place the “fogs” on the rails.

“Whatever is the use of those pieces of paper?” says my friend Ted. “Well,” I reply, “don’t you see that it is so dark and foggy, I should lose time if I had to look for the ‘fogs’ every time I wished to knock them off the rail, and as you can yourself see, it becomes easy to find out where they are now.”

I had hardly got the words out of my mouth before I could hear a train approaching, and as all the signals were at danger I told Ted to stand quite still and proceeded to wave a red light, when—

Bang—bang—bang went the fogs on the fast road, as the train drew up close to the signal.

"Well, chum, how are you coming up?" says the driver.

"Oh, all right, and you are 'right away,'" I answer, as I perceive the signal drop.

"That's the style, mate; good night," he shouts, as he drives on.

While replacing some more "fogs" on the rail, bang—bang—go two more "fogs" on the slow road, accompanied with a growl from the driver of a goods train: "What! Some more of those rotted things; it's nothing else but 'fogs' going all the way up."

"Oh! you are all right," I make answer, "for some time, as there are several passenger trains due in before you."

Now, finding I have a minute to spare, I hunt up a piece of wood, and get my friend to split it up to make a fire, as I find he is considerably scared at the explosion of the "fogs," and I think he will be best employed for a short time.

"Will you give me a bit of coal, officer?" I asked the driver of the goods.

"We ain't got any to spare," is the ungracious reply; so I have to find some, and we very soon have a good fire blazing away.

"Well, I'll be hanged, Tom, old man, if I should like your job," says my friend, as we stand by the fire, "for you are not only in danger from the trains, but don't some of those 'fogs' fly about! One of them nearly hit me on the arm."

"Yes, I know they do fly, but you must turn your back to them when you hear a train approaching, as I have had a nasty cut from a piece of one over the eye here." But now we are going to be busy again, and once more the "fogs" are banging away to the right and left, and I have to look "slippy," giving the drivers the right signal with my hand-lamp and replacing the "fogs." Now, as we stand by the fire, Ted tells me he has always been under the impression, until now, that there were very few trains by night, as compared with the day trains. But that's where so many people are deceived, for there are "special goods" and ordinary coal trains by dozens, besides "specials" of fish or meat, which are run at night so as to ensure this perishable kind of traffic running in as short a time as possible.

"Ah! Here comes the last passenger train to-night, Ted," I exclaim, as I hear one long whistle, just before she reaches us, and I give the driver the "all right" signal as soon as the "fixed" signal drops, but—

"Hallo! Who is that calling? I do hope it is not another poor creature knocked down," I exclaim, as we both make our way towards where the cries are coming from; and after a minute or two we find the person who has been calling so pitifully for help (which is enough to unnerve anyone, for one never knows what awful sight we might be called upon to see on a railway). She is an old lady, lying doubled up, as if in great pain, and according to her somewhat confused statements she was a passenger by the train that has just gone, and when the driver had pulled up at my signal she had evidently mistaken

the lights in an empty train that stood on a siding close by for the station lights, and she had accordingly stepped out, and had fallen rather heavily upon her ankle; but luckily for the poor old lady, she had escaped with no other injury; and after sending Ted off to the station for help, I found my hands pretty full, as I had several goods and coal trains about, and this poor half-hysterical old lady to look after.

But here comes Ted with an inspector and two porters (Ted having met them on the way, as another passenger had told them at the station that someone had fallen out), and they proceeded to gently help the old lady along, one of the porters leading the way with a hand-lamp. After we had finished talking (between trains) over this incident Ted asks me how long I had been a fogman. I tell him "Near six years, as makes no odds," not a very long time as compared with some others, I daresay.

"Well, and what was your first experience of fogging like? for after what I have seen of it I think I should cut but a poor figure if I were left to 'fog' by myself," says Ted.

"My first experience of fogging I shall never forget, although I was not a fogman, being only about eleven or twelve years of age at the time to which I refer."

"Whatever could you know about fogging," laughs Ted, "at that age?"

"Well, if you will leave off laughing I will tell you," I answer.

"At the time to which I allude my brother Ralph (who has lost a leg in the service) was at home, and he used to take special delight when we all sat round the fire in the old home, on those dark wintry evenings, in reading to us those stirring tales of England's wars, both by sea and land; and as one evening we listened to him reading of Napoleon, and of his threats towards our own little island, my heart was stirred within me, and just then, the clock striking nine, I was trundled off to bed, much against my wish.

"But sleep, balmy sleep, soon took possession of my weary eyelids. But not for long was my sleep balmy, for I began to dream of Napoleon, and that he had at last taken ship, and was coming indeed to our dear country, and then (in my dream) I fancied he had landed and got to London, and I could hear the distant shots drawing nearer and nearer, and louder and louder, until I awoke, trembling in every limb, and covered with perspiration. But now that I was awake, was it a dream?"

"All was dark, but not silent, for I could hear the shots now quite plainly.

"Yes, there was no doubt of it; bang—bang—bang, they went; and I, what could I do?"

"Ah! I have it; there is father, and only asleep in the next room.

"I did not lay thinking, for could I not hear those shots more often now? So, jumping out of bed, off I ran to my father's bedside, telling him, in my excitement, to get up at once, as the French had come indeed, and he had better take the old sword that hung over the mantelpiece, and go and fight them.

" 'My dear child,' said my father, 'it is not the French that are coming, it is the fogmen on the railway that you can hear.'"

"But I did not feel really comfortable until morning came again.

"And now you can laugh as long as you like at my first experience, Master Ted, but it all seemed very real to me."

"You would not have thought that in after years you would be stuck out here in the cold letting the same sort of things off that frightened you so?" said Ted.

"No, we can never tell what we may be called upon to do; and now here comes Donald with the fogging refreshments, which, as you see, consist of a pint of coffee and some beef, ham, and bread, which is very acceptable, especially when we get it at the proper time."

"The fog is getting clearer now," says Donald, "and so I expect you will soon be 'knocked off.'"

"Oh, well then," says Ted, "I think I will not stay any longer, but trot off home and get an hour or two's rest, and I will call round at your place, Tom, as you have asked me to, before long, and have a chat with you again; for I am sure I shall never forget spending 'A Night in the Fog.'"



How Our Forefathers Travelled.

(A Retrospect.)

BY A LOCOMOTIVE STOREKEEPER, *Midland Railway.*

ONE hears so much of the glories of the so-called "good old times" of our forefathers that, but for the writings of our more matter-of-fact authors, such as Lord Macaulay, and a few others, we should naturally be inclined to envy them the oft-quoted good things of those days, and in some cases to even regret that our own existence had been so long delayed as to prohibit us participating in the many privileges which appearances would have us believe were then enjoyed.

I am afraid that were it possible to turn the wheel of time back and transfer us even only so far as to a corresponding period of the last century, when the people had at least begun to realise some of the refinements of civilisation, we would, in spite of the bustle and worry of this age of progress, ere long gladly exchange again for our present condition, with its accompanying modern conveniences and appliances.

In the resources of travel alone, we have so far outdistanced the means of that age as to leave them altogether in the shade, and, indeed, almost beyond the pale of any comparison at all. A journey which, so far as the distance is concerned, would nowadays be looked upon as quite a trivial matter, would then have called for considerable contemplation and preparation. Prior to such an undertaking, it was then a recognised necessity that all business matters should be cleared up as far as practicable, that the "will" (if the would-be traveller was the fortunate possessor of such a luxury) should receive parting attention, that the old family pistols be taken in hand, and rendered as serviceable as their worn locks and antiquated manufacture would allow.

Then, burdened with greatcoats, wraps, and various other impedimenta, the good man would, upon the eventful morn, indulge in the most pathetic leave-taking of his loved ones, and eventually depart amidst their lamentations at his enforced absence and solicitations for his comfort and safety.

Although much of this may appear to border on the absurd, yet when we come to consider the extraordinary lengths of time occupied in their journeys, and the nature of the roads and unprotected condition of the country parts, we can readily conceive that such practices and precautions were not altogether without some grounds for justification.

During the latter part of the last century the single trip from London to Edinburgh by coach occupied the almost incredible period of a fortnight to complete. From London to York was at

least a four days' journey, whilst other distances took a proportionately long time in accomplishing.

Imagination can easily picture a journey of, say, a fortnight's duration, in the clumsy, rickety conveyances of those days, over rough, rutty, uncared-for roads, and wild tracks of country infested by notorious "knights of the road," and other innumerable scoundrels of all descriptions, ever ready for any marauding enterprise that might offer itself to them.

During the summer time, when the weather and light contributed to safety, such a trip might have been tolerable, but the experiences of the rainy and winter seasons of the year must have been miserable and appalling. This state of things was, of course, in time improved upon to a considerable extent; so much so that, as an illustration, it may be mentioned that in 1830 seven coaches were employed between London and Edinburgh alone, and these, under favourable circumstances, accomplished the distance in 48 hours. At this period, however, this mode of travelling had practically received its death-blow, and had slowly, but surely, to give way to the superior achievements of the locomotive steam engine, and the various introductions in connection with it, all of which have tended to make the resources of travel as extensive and complete as we find them to-day.

Recollections of a Carriage Searcher.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.*

"**A** CARRIAGE what?" Ah, well, I'll briefly explain. On most lines, in consequence of the large amount of property left behind in the carriages by the travelling public, servants are appointed by the company at all their chief termini, whose duty it is, after the passengers have alighted, to examine the interior of the trains, and take charge of any loose articles found therein, and after entering an account of such in a "record of lost luggage" book, deposit them with the cloak-room officials, who retain them until they are either claimed by the rightful owners, or, as is more often the case, "knocked down to the highest bidder" by the half-yearly "cheap jack." At the time of which I write I had been on duty about an hour and had been through several main-liners, when an old lady came hurrying up the platform, calling out in loud tones, "Where's that policeman—the man who searches? Oh, my! wherever is he?" she being under the impression, evidently, that the occupation of the person she sought was in some way similar to that of a certain functionary usually found in the charge office of our police-stations. Concluding it was me she wanted, I made in her direction and asked of what service I could be. She stated she had arrived a

few minutes previously by the Sheffield train, and, unfortunately, had left behind in a third-class compartment a small leather hold-all, containing a little money and some papers, solemnly assuring me she would not like to part with the latter for any amount. Amongst a number of other things I had picked up in a G. N. coach was an old-fashioned, grandmotherly sort of purse, the contents consisting of a sixpenny piece, threepence in copper, an odd farthing, and two pawn-tickets—one descriptive of a gold wedding-ring, and the other showing that 5s. had been obtained on a "keeper," both pledged that morning. She apologised for troubling me, and after handing over her treasure—the articles I have enumerated—she offered me, in return for my exceeding great kindness, as she expressed it, what probably was a third of her worldly wealth, namely, the odd threepence, which I respectfully declined to accept, giving as my reason for the serious breach of official etiquette the company's rule strictly prohibiting their servants receiving gratuities. What railway man, with an atom of true manhood in his carcase, would have acted otherwise in such circumstances? Ah, me! what a host of tender recollections there might possibly exist between that dear old soul and the circlelets of gold named on those bits of paper I could only infer, as with an expression of gratitude and a grateful bow she left me to my own reflections. A few weeks afterwards a middle-aged personage, giving herself the airs of a duchess (she may possibly have been one for all I knew to the contrary—of Rosemary Lane, probably), approached me, and inquired if I was the "search-ah." An affirmative reply elicited from her the fact that she had left her "satchel" in a first-class carriage of the early morning train. I suggested the 5.15 a.m. *ex* King's Cross—newspaper flyer—but was instantly met with, "Are you mad, you impudent puppy? how dare you insult me! I shall instantly report you to your superintendent." Of course, as in duty bound, I craved her ladyship's pardon, expressing at the same time regret at even venturing an opinion on such a personal matter, and she, after "cooling down" slightly, condescended to explain that it was the London express leaving St. Pancras somewhere about 11 a.m. by which her ladyship had travelled. I found the identical piece of furniture—an old dilapidated-looking purse, containing thirty-six sovereigns, some small change in silver, and, curiously enough, a coin similar in value to one mentioned in the last case, namely, our old friend in infancy, a lucky farthing. After minutely describing her "lost luggage," I allowed her to regain possession, and my honesty was requited by—well—a—not so much as even an attempted imitation of the smile of the benevolent old lady; but seating herself in the cab which she had imperiously demanded I should hail for her, drove from the station, the cabby on his return telling me that she had disputed his right to charge 1s. 6d., the exact legal fare, for having driven her a little short of two miles, considering 1s. ample remuneration for the small service rendered. Such is life.

In Uniform.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Caledonian Railway.*

TO anyone desiring proof that clothes go to make up the man, we would recommend a perusal of the Sage of Chelsea's most wonderful book, "Sartor Resartus." In its mystical pages the uses and abuses of clothes are fully discussed. It should be doubly interesting to railway servants—uniform ones, at least—as it occasionally refers to circumstances in which they may at times find themselves placed. Speaking of a great assembly, composed of kings, courtiers, priests, ambassadors, soldiers, sailors, tinkers, tailors, beggars, etc., what would be the result, asks Carlyle, if in an instant all their outer garments were to fall off? Let us "railwayfy" (you needn't consult Johnson for that one) the matter.

Let us suppose ourselves in the manager's office. In a chair sits that important personage; at his elbow stands his assistant. Head clerks, shorthand clerks, under clerks, junior clerks, office boys, and messengers flock around. In comes a deputation from the line. Perhaps we have two drivers, two signalmen, brakesmen, guards, firemen, shunters, porters, stationmasters, ticket collectors, etc., there they are; when, in a most unwarrantable manner, and without the slightest notice, every stitch of outer clothing falls from off the astonished mortals. Now, let any stranger enter, and we defy him to select from out that shivering crew a manager from a ticket collector. So much for the philosophy of clothes. Many railwaymen love their uniform, many don't. Some don their regimentals on every possible occasion; others only when the eagle eye of the overseer looks their way. There are many reasons for this. When one starts as a boy on the line he gets so well used to his railway outfit that in a year or two he is never "at home" when "dressed." At their work railway servants come more in contact with the "uppah kwust" than any other workmen; and is it not a little hard on an honest young fellow (perhaps a porter or ticket-collector at some branch or wayside station), who, chancing to meet some young lady—whom he has, perhaps, obliged in many ways, and whom he has seen every day for years—is it not a little hard, then, if he should chance to meet her when on duty, and, acting on the spur of the moment, lift his cap, and then for his gallantry (impertinence, she styles it) get a look with nothing short of murder in it?

Uniform, in a limited sense, is a test of friendship. Yonder comes McPherson. Ah! he has seen me. How do I know? Simply because I see him crossing the street; he always does so. But here comes Thomas. He is a friend of but a few days' standing. In fact, he only came to our street three weeks ago. Here he comes. He seems to have a love for astronomy, however

—though stars don't bloom in the daytime; that man evidently does not like buttons.

Such is the experience of the average railwayman.

Scotchmen "rant and rave" about "the immortal memory of Burns." He was the writer of that world-famous song, "A man's a man for a' that." In it he declares "The rank is but the guinea stamp, the man's the gowd for a' that." The Scottish upper and middle classes admire the national poet; they have Burns' clubs all over the world; they laud his songs and sentiments up to the very skies—but that is all they do. They despise those who talk his homely Doric; they look with contempt on the honest son of toil; they forget that Robert Burns was a humble ploughman.

But even amongst ourselves there is great jealousy about "caste." Catch a signalman answering to the shout, "Porter, take my bag!" Or behold the wrathful look on his face when a country yokel in search of work asks him, "If they're needin' any washers at his shed?" How angry we feel when we hear that the company intend giving us "cord" suits this summer! We imagine it will lower our dignity. Well, if it's the clothes that make the man, they will; but if not, they won't.

On certain men change of dress creates as great a transformation in appearance as doth the glorious summer's sun when it breaks forth in all its splendour on the sleeping landscape, so long covered with the winter's snows. We have known men for years (only in uniform), but on meeting them when dressed, we actually did not recognise them; so that there really must be something in "the philosophy of clothes."

What a great improvement a white band round one's cap makes, to be sure! Men, who in ordinary uniform appear but common five-eighths, will often, with this trifling addition to their headpiece, become quite "braw." What a marked change there is in Inspector So-and-so since he was a brakesman; why men, you'd hardly know him!

Railwaymen form but a portion of our uniformed workmen. We have postmen, soldiers, watermen, gasmen, carmen, etc.; but (perhaps excepting the first-named) uniform men are looked down upon. Well, we can't help it; and although we may not feel at all flattered by the uniform provided us "by loving hands" (?), still, if we apply to it the smart rejoinder made by Paddy to his country's declaimers—"Shure, now, if I niver give me counthry iny razun to be ashamed o' me, thin, bhoys, I'm purty wall sartin I nade niver be ashamed ov her"—we may feel some satisfaction.



Passengers' Lost Property: To Whom does it belong?

BY A TELEGRAPH CLERK, *North Staffordshire Railway.*

ANYONE who has attended a railway company's annual sale of lost and unclaimed property must have been struck by the great number and variety of articles which the carelessness of their late owners has brought under the hammer. The amount of money annually realised by these sales must be very great, and this is no doubt one of the principal auxiliary sources of income to the various railway companies.

All articles found by railway servants on the station premises or in the trains have to be given up to the stationmaster, who keeps them for a short period, and, if they are not claimed, sends them on to the lost luggage depot, where they lie until the next sale takes place, and the money realised goes into the coffers of the company, and helps to swell the dividends. The public, too, are expected to hand over such articles to the railway officials; and if they are unclaimed by the owners they are never seen again by the finders, unless they happen to be present at the sale.

What right the railway companies have to these articles, or to the money realised thereby, I am at a loss to understand. According to law—as interpreted by the leading lights of the profession—such articles belong to the finders, if they are unclaimed within a certain period. Only quite recently the barrister who presides over the legal column of a weekly newspaper expressed himself to an inquiring correspondent to that effect. This agrees with other authoritative opinions I have heard expressed on the subject.

From this it is clear to all (except the railway companies) that their appropriation of such articles as are left behind by passengers, and found by railway servants and others, being unclaimed, is illegal. But, notwithstanding this fact, once a railway company obtains possession of such an article nothing short of a legal action will enable the finder to regain it. The only other method of overreaching the company is to stick to the article, and give them notice of the find, to enable the owner to identify if any claim is made. This course is only open to passengers; if a railway servant were to refuse to give up any article found, dismissal would follow.

The companies' claim seems to rest on the fact of the articles being found on their premises. This is absurd. An article picked up in the street is not considered the property of the corporation; neither does one found in a tram, omnibus, or cab belong to the tramway or other company.

Let us look at the regulations affecting the cab drivers and tram and omnibus conductors of London. These men have to hand over to the police at Scotland Yard everything found in their vehicles. If they are claimed by the owners the finders are entitled to an award of 3s. in the pound on money, jewellery, etc., and 2s. 6d. in the pound on the assessed value of other articles. If they are not claimed within three months they are returned to the finders, and become their property on application for the same being made.

It is stated on good authority that railway companies have no conscience. Gentle hints—such as this article—have no effect in awakening that latent faculty, unless other pressure is brought to bear upon them. Why should not we have similar regulations to those above mentioned put in force for the benefit of our railway servants? Why should a railway company reap the benefit of everything that is found all along the line? Are the porters and carriage-cleaners to get nothing for finding and restoring the hundreds of pounds—both money and its value—lost on our railways in the course of a year? Is it fair that things should remain as they are?

Let these questions be answered satisfactorily, and the public will reap the benefit if the railway companies do not. The railway servants will have an inducement to be honest, and the number of purses and other articles which now frequently get lost, and are never heard of again, will steadily decrease.

Sketches of Railway Life.—The Policeman.

By G. H. S.

SWORN in, sir? Yes; quite as much as any other constable, and I have authority to arrest within half-a-mile of the railway for railway offences. But it is not so on all railways. For instance, the Mid-Northern don't swear in their men, and, in consequence, they have the county or borough police to call to their assistance often in cases where we could act independently.

"Do many people show fight? Not many. Besides, you'll notice we're not chickens. Probably there will not be more than half-a-dozen passengers on this platform to-day who are either as tall or as heavy as I.

"Height? Weight? Age? 5ft. 11in.; 13st. 7lb.; 28 years.

"No, sir, as you say, I shall never be in better condition. But men my own size are not so disposed for fighting as those who are smaller, and it is very much the same in dealing with them as the case of a child in the hands of its mother. They

are simply marched away, without much notice being taken of their kicks and noise.

"Yes, of course, numbers make a difference. Then one or two have to go down; but when they get up again they generally move off, threatening to have me before the Bench for assault and battery, and their friends threatening to be witnesses against me.

"Yes, I once had my match, or about.

"Well, if you care to hear the story. I was stationed at G—, and there had been many reports of goods missing between that station and several others, so that you see it was pretty clear the thief was at our end; and you'll see just as clearly that my credit was at stake. One Sunday I determined to lie in wait for my hearty, under the stage of the goods shed; and I can assure you it was a dull job, for one could not stir for fear of betraying one's presence, and to smoke would have been even more senseless, in addition to being a breach of regulations.

"At three o'clock I heard someone moving about, having got in, as I afterwards found, by levering upwards the bolt, which worked perpendicularly in a slot midway of the groove in which the door ran to open or close, and then, of course, levering the door along the groove from the end.

"I never once thought of having to do with more than a common pilferer, who would go with me upon the mere invitation; and, emerging from my hiding-place, I suddenly confronted him, just after he had unsheeted a wagon and was in it, examining its contents.

"As he looked up at me I saw he was my match, and I prepared to receive a few knocks as well as give them, when he almost took my breath away by saying that whilst he must congratulate me on the fact, yet I had spoiled a good thing, for it was my superintendent's wish to let me see what could be done under my nose, by sending me something that had been taken out of that wagon while I was on duty, and that that something would have been accompanied by notice to leave the service. He added that he was the enquiry officer, who had in hand the investigation of the recent pilferages, and was proceeding to give me his views upon the subject, all the time leisurely sheeting the wagon again, when I intimated that I would, in turn, have my little joke with the superintendent, and in that view would treat his enquiry officer only as a plausible scoundrel, who ought to be locked up.

"Scarcely had the words left my lips when he banged his fist into my face; but, as luck would have it, he slipped at the same moment, and did me little harm, whilst, recovering quickly, I caught him a dinging blow on the side of the head that nearly knocked him silly. He was now on the ground, and I could have had my snaps on him in no time; but my blood was up, and I either forgot or didn't take the trouble to think the question was otherwise than man to man, and I called upon him to get up, which he did. He then came at me with a rush, giving me one or two stiffish ones before I could get in at all. However, when I did, it was fair in the throat, and his tongue shot out of

his mouth as if it would come away entirely, whilst his eyes seemed to have gone all to white. Of course he went down, where, this time, I took good care to keep him till the bracelets adorned his wrists.

"What did the superintendent say about my treating his enquiry officer so? Oh, you will have guessed it was the thief I had caught. With his capture the pilferages ceased. Several receivers were implicated by him, and amongst them they disgorged property, stolen from one place or another, amounting to several hundred pounds in value.

"Your train is running quarter of an hour late, sir; and there's just time to tell, if you've nothing better to do than listen, how I did get a real fright once.

"Interesting, sir? Much obliged to you for saying so.

"I had spent five minutes talking to the checker, in the goods shed, before he went off duty, and noticed a cottage piano on the stage, which, he informed me, was part of a consignment of furniture that was to be sent away next day; and when he had finished work he locked the small door that was let into the large one, which I mentioned in connection with the last incident, and gave me the key as usual, bidding me 'good night' as he put it into my hand.

"Not long afterwards one of the saddest things that can happen in a railway man's experience occurred. A poor fellow was brought in off the line, dead: a perfect stranger, who had apparently been walking on the railway, and had been struck by an engine in the back, which was broken. In default of a better place, we laid him on planks and trestles in the goods shed, covering his face, which was as peaceful as that of a child, with a handkerchief; and at the request of the borough police he was permitted to lie there till morning. He had had with him a roll of music, and I noticed the title of it was that of a very popular song at that period—namely, 'Dream Faces.' This was placed beside him, and he was left by himself, the key of the shed coming again into my possession.

"It was just about 12 midnight when, on going my round, I thought I heard the sound of a piano being played, and, pausing, I could distinctly make out the melody of the song I have mentioned. A feeling came over me like one that I had been a stranger to ever since I was a child and believed in ghosts and bogies. Perhaps you know what it is, sir? A feeling as if something had suddenly dislodged itself from the base of your throat and shot into your body, followed by a chill that seizes you all over, creeping downwards to your legs, upwards to your hair, which it seems to stiffen into bristles, and leaving behind it a perspiration that has drained you of every iota of sustaining power, so that the creak of your own boot—nay, even the rub of your cheek on the collar of your cape—makes you start with nervous dread of something you cannot conceive of, except that it is horrible. How long I listened I cannot say, but I remembered what I pictured to myself as taking place in the shed.

"Yes, sir; the dead man sitting at the piano and playing from his roll of music.

"However, I pulled myself together when the notes ceased, and in less time than it takes me to say it I was persuaded that it had been but a fancy. I told myself it was merely a development of a singing in the ears, which I sometimes experienced, and which a little medicine invariably cured. Perhaps a sharp walk would do me good, I thought, and I set off at a swinging pace round my beat.

"In ten minutes I was myself again, and had just repassed the shed, when the exquisitely plaintive chords of the first few bars of the 'Dead March' in 'Saul,' with which I was familiar, reached me. I stopped to listen, sick with the old sensation, till the entire piece was played, and was just stealing away on tip-toe to go—I knew not where—for something that should put nerve in me, when the most fearful scream that ever smote human sense, I think, broke upon the stillness.

"What to do but to escape from the place I couldn't think; and I was staggering helplessly about, when, to my intense joy, I saw the bull's-eye and caught the solid tread of one of my friends of the borough force, who, answering to my whistle, was quickly at my side, and together we entered the shed.

"We found the dead man lying as he had been laid, and something else. In a swoon on the floor was a young goods clerk, who had determined to play a practical joke upon me; and knowing the fact of the piano being in the shed, he had opened the office, which was contiguous, with his own key, passed thence by a communicating door into the shed, and sat down to the instrument with entire success; but in leaving he had blundered against something, and putting out his hand to save himself from falling, he had clasped one of those of the dead man. It was he whose scream and whose fall I heard.

"You're quite right, sir; it cured him entirely of practical joking. Here's your train."



Smoking Compartments.

BY A GUARD, *London and North Western Railway.*

“**W**ELL, guard, the old game! Here I’ve been along the train two or three times, and every smoking compartment is filled with a parcel of women. It’s enough to make a saint swear!” The complaint embodied in the above words is one which is of frequent occurrence at our large stations prior to the departure of our main-line trains. It is, naturally, a source of great annoyance to a smoker who is going on a long journey, and who, of course, is desirous of a seat where he can enjoy a quiet whiff of his pipe or cigar in comfort, to find the compartments set apart for smoking occupied solely by members of the female sex.

Ladies complain strongly nowadays of the want of courtesies shown towards them by men whilst travelling on the railway; but they must remember that so long as they continue to usurp the places and ape the ways of the men they will always find some who will completely ignore their claims to be considered as members of the weaker sex.

Why ladies should have such a peculiar penchant for smoking compartments when travelling is altogether past my humble power to explain thoroughly. Whether it is that they are thus sure of having the society of the opposite sex, or whether it is for the pure spirit of contrariness, which is one of their most prominent characteristics, is not for me to say.

It is worse than useless to remonstrate with them; and to inform them that they are only excluding the legitimate occupants by usurping the seats reserved for smokers is sufficient to draw down on your devoted head a perfect storm of words about your want of gallantry towards them.

Bless them! “When they will, they will, and there’s an end on’t.” So wrote one of the old writers, and we are no nearer a solution to-day as to why a woman should always desire to have the last word than this sage was when he penned the above words.

Smoking compartments—sometimes too few, and sometimes too many—are a continual source of discomfort to the guard in charge of a train, according as the smokers or non-smokers predominate; and it is always a hard matter to gauge successfully the laws of supply and demand.

Many smokers, selfish to the last degree in the enjoyment of their “weed,” persist in lighting up in non-smoking compartments, much to the discomfort of the other passengers, whose protests against such a proceeding are generally unheeded until the guard is brought on the scene.

Here we have, too, the rabid anti-smoker, who on all occasions inveighs against the use of “this obnoxious and poisonous

weed," as he terms tobacco. Let him open the door of a non-smoking compartment, and he instantly detects a smell of tobacco, to which he must, of course, draw the guard's attention, loudly complaining at the same time that he must have been cognisant of the fact that the compartment had been used for smoking purposes, and that quite recently.

The guard does his best to soften this gentleman's wrath (as he is usually a dangerous customer to deal with), but he only partly succeeds, as he is told that such a flagrant breach of duty shall be duly reported to headquarters.

Many funny incidents are often noticed in connection with smoking compartments and their occupants. One afternoon during last summer, while one of our north express trains was standing at a large junction station, waiting to resume its journey northwards, I perceived in a first-class compartment a middle-aged lady sitting alone in solitary grandeur.

On the one quarter-light was a label, "Smoking Compartment," and on the other a label "For Ladies Only." Whether it was a new departure on the part of the company to provide separate smoking accommodation for the ladies, inasmuch that some of them may be seen sometimes smoking mild cigarettes while travelling, I know not, but the incident provided some slight amusement for those passengers who noticed it.

Another amusing incident which happened in the north (although I cannot vouch for its accuracy) is as follows:—

"An old lady from Galashiels having paid a visit to the north of England, lately set out on her journey home again. After procuring her ticket at the railway station, she hurried along the platform twice or thrice, with a large umbrella under her arm and a bonnet-box in her hand, in search of a carriage in which to accommodate herself, but without finding one suitable.

"At length, however, she espied one which appeared to her the most desirable, and opened the door, but, as she did so, a gentleman, the only occupant of the compartment, barred her entrance, saying; 'You mustn't come in here, my good woman; you mustn't come in here.' 'What for?' asked the old lady, sharply. 'It's a smoking compartment,' answered the gentleman. 'Gudeness, man, that's the very thing I'm lookin' for,' and raising her umbrella threateningly, she cried: 'Get oot o' that, an' let's in!' The gentleman could not resist such an appeal, and the old lady gained admission. After carefully depositing her umbrella and bonnet-box on the seat, she drew out a black cutty-pipe, and soon enveloped herself in such a cloud of smoke that the gentleman was glad to make himself scarce at the next stopping-place."



Jim Dickson's Enemy.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Caledonian Railway.*

T WAS the night of the "Black Squad's" soir  e, and consequently there had been a look of expectation on many faces in the shops all day.

Jim Dickson, however, had wrought on at his bench "all silent and alone." At breakfast and dinner hours he had to journey home by himself, for no one seemed to care about accompanying him on the way.

For three months or more Jim Dickson had had a sore time of it. Previous to this he had been learning his trade in the loco. works; but now that his time was nearly out, the under-manager had thought it best to give the youth a year in the engine shops. Whilst in the works Jim Dickson had been a great favourite, but since his immigration to the shops everyone seemed displeased with him. The lad could not understand it: he had done everything in his power to gain his mates' esteem, but he had signally failed, his greatest enemy being Duncan McIntosh, a brilliant young engineer. Jim and Duncan had commenced to learn their trade at the same time; and whilst Jim was the son of a poor widow, Duncan's father had works of his own in a country town. Jim had taken to Duncan from the moment he first saw him, for there was something attractive about the young engineer which was quite irresistible. So for a year the two were great friends, but at the end of that time their friendship ended. Both had been attending night classes in connection with their trade; and Duncan McIntosh had started with the determination to carry everything before him, which he undoubtedly would have done but for Jim Dickson, who for three years in succession stood first on the list of prize-winners. This to Duncan was unbearable; and, with thoughtless haste, he turned his old love for Jim into hatred, and never lost an opportunity of persecuting the widow's son.

Duncan was a "strong favourite" amongst a certain class. In the football, cricket, and racing fields he was without a rival in all the works, whilst at swimming and singing, and other accomplishments too numerous to mention, he was no novice. Thus, as he rose in his workmates' esteem, poor Jim Dickson fell correspondingly low.

Whilst Jim remained in the works, however, he had no cause to complain, for the men there had known him ere Duncan McIntosh turned his foe; but since he had been sent to the shops, amongst comparative strangers, the youth had been harshly dealt with. Duncan made everyone believe his enemy was "stuck up," and if one's carrying a book in his pocket for

spare moments, instead of joining in the horse-play round about, is "stuck-up-ness," Jim was undoubtedly guilty; but this was the extent of his pride.

The two youths had been running each other pretty close at the Technical College evening classes, and not a few thought Duncan would win. He had been studying hard of late, giving up his more congenial athletic pursuits so as to allow more time for study; and probably if he had done this some years before Jim Dickinson would never have topped the tree. For Duncan McIntosh was a really gifted lad—his forehead showed deep thought and penetrating investigation, and was a good inch broader than his rival's; but what are these phrenological gifts when we do not cultivate them? Anyone looking at the two lads would at once have given Duncan the palm, for Jim's appearance was but poor before that of his formidable rival.

At the beginning of the winter the loco. superintendent had offered a special prize to be competed for by apprentices in the railway works and shops. Jim Dickson and Duncan McIntosh had entered. The latter had been studying as he never had studied before, and though the winner had not yet been declared, he was to be declared this evening at the soirée.

Duncan felt pretty confident of success.

The 5.30 p.m. bell had just rung, and whilst jackets were being put on and pipes lit, in comes the loco. foreman in a great state of excitement, for a break-down had taken place at a busy junction two miles off, and the tool-van would require to be turned out.

Duncan McIntosh's face fell; for he was first in turn in cases of emergency during the night, therefore he must accompany the break-down gang. How could he do so? His fond mother and two sisters were coming from the country to be present at the soirée and presentation of prizes, and Duncan was to meet them at the station, for they knew naught about the city and its many thoroughfares. What could he do? In vain he tried to get one of his "thickest" friends to take his place; in vain he pleaded with those to whom he had rendered many a good turn; and after receiving many rude answers, he sank down in despair. But Jim Dickson had been taking stock!

* * * * *

Duncan McIntosh was supremely happy. Seated by the side of his handsome mother, he gazed down on the great sea of faces from the elevated platform. He had been pleasantly surprised when on going to sign his name for the tool-van he found someone had taken his place. Indeed, so great was his astonishment that he forgot to ask the volunteer's name.

Two hours sped on, and about 9 o'clock the manager called on James Dickson and Duncan McIntosh to come up before the chair. Duncan at once stepped down, but Jim Dickson did not appear. A note was handed to the chairman, and after reading it he requested Duncan to take his seat for a little, till Mr. Dickson could appear.

Duncan had to wait a long half-hour ere his rival put in an

appearance; and then Jim was hurried up to the platform—all black and greasy. He it was who had taken Duncan's place when no one else could be found. He it was who had shown himself to be a veritable friend indeed. So when the manager proclaimed that James Dickson and Duncan McIntosh had almost tied for the first prize, the former having only won by a minor point, but that several gentlemen had determined to give the loser a consolation prize, no one cheered the announcement more lustily than Duncan McIntosh, hitherto known as "Jim Dickson's enemy," but henceforth his staunchest friend.

First Aid: or Jock's First Patient.

BY A SHUNTER, *North Eastern Railway.*

JOCK MCINTOSH was a student in the local class of the St. John Ambulance Association, which was held every Sunday afternoon in the mess-room of the loco. sheds. The class was composed entirely of railwaymen of various grades, and various intellects, too. Many were the hearty laughs indulged in by the more intelligent section of the class at the blunders and mistakes committed by those members whose eyesight is clearer than their brains. Sometimes Jock would indulge in a hearty roar, when someone gave an answer outside of any ambulance book, or other book in print—perhaps an original answer. Can anyone wonder, then, at Jock's risibility being tickled when a member declared that the lungs took in at each "inspiration" large quantities of "oxalic acid"; or that they gave off "carbolic acid" at each "expiration"? But one day Jock was asked by the teacher what he would do in the event of a person getting an arm severed from the body. "Oh," said Jock, "I would apply pressure on the 'brachial artery.'" "Yes; very good," said the teacher; "but there is something else you must do." "What's that, then?" interrogated Jock. "Well," said the teacher, "you must ascertain whether you have stopped the bleeding or not." "Well, I would feel the pulse," retorted Jock, with a very wise and triumphant expression depicted on his countenance—as much as to say: "You don't know much about it, mister, or else you wouldn't ask such a silly question as that." But Jock never found out for a long time what it was that tickled the risibilities of his fellow-students. One day Jock was on his road home, after finishing his day's work. It had been snowing in the morning, and then the wind had freshened, causing the snow to melt; but as night set in, so did the frost, thereby making it dangerous for pedestrians on the sidewalk. As I said before, Jock was pursuing the "even tenor of his way," when immediately in front of him he observed an old gentleman slip, and fall heavily on the pavement. Jock bounded forward and proffered his assistance to help the

gentleman rise ; but the spirit of the gent. or something else was exceedingly weak, for beyond one ineffectual effort to rise, and a volley of "blessings" on the weather and the corporation, he seemed quite content to lie where he had fallen. "Is it your leg, maister?" asked Jock. "Yes, it's my leg, and something more." Visions of a paragraph in the local papers, giving in glowing terms the important services rendered by Mr. John McIntosh in saving the limb, if not the life, of a fellow-creature, assailed Jock's mind. "Now or never," he muttered, and, stooping down, he fastened his cravat round the gentleman's thigh ; whereupon the old gent asked him what the devil he was after. "Whe'est, whe'est, sir," exclaimed Jock, "I'll have you as right as a 'trivet' in a minute." "Trivet be hanged ; get a cab, and take me home." "No, no !" answered Jock, "the doctor's you mean. And oh ! sir, you're bleedin', too." Paying no further attention to the gent's protests, Jock fastened the gentleman's stick through the cravat, gave it two turns, and fastened the lower end to the side of the gent's leg, thereby making a tourniquet and a splint both at once. Hastily binding the feet of his patient together, Jock asked one of the crowd, which had gathered meanwhile, to stay beside the patient until he came back. Some of them were hard-hearted enough to say that Jock was only killing the man. Jock heeded them not ; but bounded up a passage instead, and returned in a few minutes carrying a window shutter which he had lifted from a room window without the permission of the occupier. "Will any o' you help me to the doctor's?" asked Jock. Yes, there were volunteers galore to help Jock to the doctor's. After placing the patient carefully on the shutter, Jock gave the order to "march," and, going before the bearers, he directed them where to travel—"for smoothness," he said. On reaching the doctor's house, Jock boldly rang the bell, and got admission at once with his patient. "Well, my man, what have we here?" enquired the doctor. "A gent with a fractured leg, with arterial bleedin', which I succeeded in stopping after considerable work, doctor," answered Jock, endeavouring at the same time to quieten the patient, who was wanting to know "what the devil they had brought him there for." "It's all right, sir," said Jock, soothingly, "you'll be as right as ever by-and-by, but have patience, sir, that's all." "Carry the gentleman in here," commanded the doctor, pointing to the surgery, where the doctor made rapid progress with the work of examining the injured limb of the patient, Jock meanwhile pacing the lobby in an excited manner. "I did not want to come here at all. I asked to be taken home, and that idiot of a railwayman persisted in bringing me here, tied up like a bundle of firewood." Jock's hair took the form of bristles on a hedgehog's back. Did he hear aright, or was he dreaming? "Ha ! ha ! ha !" laughed the doctor, emerging from the surgery, holding his sides. "Arterial bleeding ! Ho ! ho ! ho ! This is good. Fractured leg ! Ha ! ha ! ha ! An artificial limb, and a bottle of the old fellow's favourite old port ! He ! he ! he !" But Jock McIntosh waited to hear no more ; it flashed across his memory in an instant, and the next instant he was off.

Original Anecdotes.

By A GUARD, *Great Eastern Railway.*

I WILL merely remark that the term "old soldier" conveys a great deal, and has probably not retained its position so long as a synonym for an individual who knows a thing or two without good grounds. Now for yarn spinning it is proverbial that both the old soldier and sailor are hard to beat. But give the average old railwayman a chance in this direction and it will take a smart raconteur of either service to "get the bulge on him," as our friends the Yanks would say. Get together three or four drivers of anything over twenty or thirty years' service, with their memories well oiled, turn the talk on to accidents, personal and otherwise, and I'll warrant that their little anecdotes, all bearing the impress of truth, would make many a retired man of war feel a little ashamed, and constrained to confess that there were others besides himself who had been in the presence of death in some of its worst forms. Moreover, the old railwayman's story is generally and properly accepted as correct. But although interested, somehow the thoughtful listen to the tales of a foreign clime and smile dubiously. For, led on by the awed looks and open mouths of his listeners, the retired "Tar" or "Tommy" is frequently tempted to bring the burnishing powers of his imagination into play, knowing full well there are none among his audience capable of combating his assertions. With the old railwayman, however, the case is different, as the places and men referred to are often well known to those around. I happened recently to have been in the presence of a little company who were recalling a few exciting incidents of their lengthened careers. The talk turned on the demeanour of the men who had been severely injured; how well some bore up at times, exhibiting a nonchalance and coolness truly surprising. "About as cool a chap as ever I saw," said a driver, "was a young goods guard I had with me once at a country siding, where we were doing a bit of shunting. I missed him for some time, and fearful something had happened I went behind, and felt quite relieved to see him sitting on a bank with one foot over his knee. Sprained his ankle, I thought. But on reaching him I found he had had his foot under a wheel, which had wrenched off not only the sole of his boot, but also the sole of his foot from toe to heel, leaving it hanging from his heel. Just as I got to him he had managed to get off what remained of his boot, and was placing the bleeding sole of his foot carefully back in its place. Putting it down just as you chaps might put a label on a box, he looked up and cheerfully remarked he reckoned that would do first-rate till he got to the doctor's. I tell you, I believe I felt sicker than he did, a good deal."

"Yes, that's pretty good, but how about that shunter at B——, on the T. Rwy.?" said another driver. "When the driver run over him he heard someone shout, and on pulling up and looking round, there was the shunter, standing up straight as a gun barrel, holding his severed left arm in his right hand. He held out the limb to the driver and said reproachfully, 'Look here, you've done a nice thing for me.' Of course, he soon dropped again, but it was an extraordinary display of nerve for the moment."

"Ah! that was on the T. line, where they used to run that fast train called the Barlow express, wasn't it?" asked a listener. "Never heard why, perhaps Mocksum there can tell us, he used to drive on that line."

The gigantic Mocksum shook his iron-grey mane, smiled, and said with the usual good-tempered twinkle in his eye, "Oh, yes! 'twas like this, you see. It was a sort of nickname given to the train by the people living about L—— station, on account of a man named Barlow—Billy Barlow they called him—having committed suicide near there by this train. The circumstances were somewhat peculiar. Barlow went home, washed, clean shaved, put on his best clothes, then went out and waited a couple of hours for this particular train to come along. He was seen by the gatekeeper near by—when too late to prevent him—to take off his collar and place his head on the rails, face to the engine, holding back with his hand his unbuttoned clean shirt the while. Well, his head was cut off as clean as it was possible to have been done; his body remained on the line, but his head rolled down the steep embankment into a ditch of water. The driver pulled up and came back just in time to see the old gatekeeper, who was much excited, go down the bank, get the head out of the ditch and start off at a great pace up the line towards the station, carrying the head in his hand by the hair. This gatekeeper, you know, walked with a peculiar halt. One leg being a little shorter than the other, he brought it up and down pretty sharp, while with the other he described a sort of half circle. Terrible as the affair was, the driver told me he couldn't help smiling to see him tearing off up the line with his gruesome load and funny walk, as if life depended on it. There was a slow train followed the express, and just as the gatekeeper reached the slope at the end of the platform, this train ran in, and discharged a good crowd of passengers. But up the slope and right amongst them charged the old man. One, two! one, two! one, two! came down the short leg, as up the platform he went, carrying the dripping head among the people as unconcernedly as if it were a Gladstone bag. He never stopped till he reached the stationmaster. 'Billy Barlow's head, sir! The beggar meant to do it, sir! The beggar meant to do it! I know he did, I watched him waiting for the express over two hours, sir.' All this was blurted out in sharp jerks in front of a crowd of passengers, before the stationmaster could get the excited old man with the head out of the way."

"You know old driver H—," continued Mocksum—who knows how to tell a tale; "well, he is a man that's had some hard luck. Had his arm cut off and an artificial one put on. He was put on an easy branch line engine, and after about two years there, had his leg cut off. They put him on another artificial member, then gave him a gate or time keeper's job in the works—I forget which. One day a stranger happened to see him seated on his stool, and after a little conversation shook hands with him. 'Don't be afraid to shake,' said old H—, 'pull it hard.' He did so, and was, of course, considerably startled to find the arm in his hand. 'That's nothing,' said the old chap, laughing merrily, 'pull this,' he added, holding up a leg. The stranger did so, and off it came. 'Now pull this,' continued the old man, holding out his head. 'Not me, I'm blowed if I do!' said the frightened stranger, as he sheered away from the uncanny looking object on the stool before doing further damage."

How I became a Signaller.

BY A STATIONMASTER, *London and North Western Railway.*

A MAIN-LINE signal-box is not exactly the place where one expects to find an extensive library of books—the men have usually too much work to do, time for reading being out of the question; but for all that it would, I think, be difficult to find a signal-box without literature of some kind. A well-thumbed Bible in one, Paine's "Age of Reason" in another, Miss Bradon's latest in the next.

Railwaymen like to read about themselves and their work; and when an outsider writes suggesting an improvement in the working of a railway, or points out how such and such an accident could have been prevented, the article or letter is discussed with much vigour amongst the men; and if the writers could hear the remarks that are sometimes passed at these discussions, they would ever forswear writing on railway matters. Many things happen on the railways that do not find their way into the papers. A railwayman who is a bit of a scribbler might frequently earn a trifle by contributing items of news to the papers; but woe betide him if he got found out—he would probably get the sack. There is an unwritten law on the railway that the employees must not give information to reporters or pressmen; hence the somewhat garbled accounts of the minor accidents and occurrences that we frequently see in the newspapers.

My promotion to the post of signaller was the result of a little mishap in the signal-box that was not reported in the papers at the time. The great company by whom I have the honour to be employed recruit their signalmen from the ranks of the porters,

lamp-boys, and messengers, and occasionally a smart plate-layer may get transferred to the coaching department, and become a signaller. The men chosen are generally trained in block telegraph working, and have to be proficient in the use of the single-needle telegraph instrument before the superintendent will pass them to act as signallers.

My appointment was a somewhat exceptional one; and how it came about is, I think, worth relating. In my young days I was office-porter at a country station on the main line. I had not much to do, and the greater part of my time was spent in the signal-box with old Tommy, the signaller. I soon became proficient in the working of the box, and was also a smart telegraphist. Many an hour did I do old Tommy's work whilst he was having a snooze, or wandering across the fields in search of mushrooms.

One night we received a message to stop the down Irish mail, a door of the van being open on the off side. Tom kept on his signals, and called me out of the office, telling me what was up, and asked me to shut the door when the train stopped at the home signal.

When the train pulled up I shut the door, and perched myself on the footboard to ride down to the signal-box, intending to drop off when the train passed; but the driver, vexed, no doubt, at being stopped at such an insignificant little station, started off at such a speed that I was afraid to drop off. I was in a pretty pickle. I had left my office-door open, and cash lying about on the counter. The stationmaster had gone home, only an old porter being left on the platform; and here was I rushing along towards Holyhead at about 50 miles an hour in the Irish mail, which was not timed to stop until it reached R—, 50 miles away. It was no use making a fuss. I once thought of pulling the communication cord, and, when the train stopped, slip off across the fields. But that was too risky; so I made myself comfortable in the van, and waited patiently until we should reach R—.

We had been running about 45 minutes when I felt the train slackening; and presently we stopped at a small roadside station. On looking out I saw the signaller waving his hand-lamp for the driver to draw up to the signal-box.

"What's up?" shouts the driver.

"I don't know," replied the signaller. "I can't get my mate's attention at the next box; he is either asleep, or the wires are broken. Go cautiously on up to the box, and see what's amiss."

"Right you are," responded the driver.

In a few minutes we were there, all the signals were on, and an up train was just slowing up as we were. I soon slipped out, and walked up to the box with the guard, who had been riding in the rear van. I explained to him who I was, and how I came to be in his train. He laughed, and said I should get the sack.

When we got up in the signal-box we found the poor signal-

man unconscious. He had evidently had a fit of some kind, and, in falling, cut his head on the stool. The guards and drivers were speechless with fright; they did not seem to know what to do. Then my knowledge of signal-box working came in useful. Some of the passengers soon found their way into the box; one of them, being a doctor, had the signalman taken outside into the air. I took charge of the signal-box, and, by means of the telegraph, explained to the signalman in the rear and advance what was the matter. I set the electric bell going to call the ganger of the platelayers to take the poor fellow home. I then started the two trains forward and worked the signal-box all that night without a hitch. I took the precaution to send a telegram to my stationmaster, telling him where I was, and what I was doing.

When I got back to my station the next day, what a blowing up I did get, to be sure! I had not been back two hours before a message came from headquarters, "Send office-porter Jones here by next train."

I trembled in my shoes when I gently tapped at the superintendent's office-door about 2.0 p.m. that afternoon. Very stern he looked, as he sat in his armchair before a table piled up with papers. "What's this I hear about your riding away from your station on the Irish mail last night? Now, tell me all about it."

I told him all about it from beginning to end.

When I had finished the old chap patted me on the back, and asked me if I should like to be a signalman.

I said I should, and in a week's time I was appointed signalman at Boxley.

Since then I have passed through the ranks of a relief signalman, inspector, and, finally, have donned the gold band of a stationmaster. Sometimes when the passengers are more troublesome than usual, when the trains will not keep time, and my pile of correspondence, which I have to tackle every night, is heavier than usual, I sigh for my old signal-box, with its sweet-smelling flowers, my singing bird, and my old fox terrier, and wish I was back with them again.



Civility.

BY A PASSENGER GUARD, *London and North Western Railway.*

A VERY useful, and, at the same time, one of the most requisite qualities for railwaymen is civility. By the word civility I do not mean that cringing servility which you may see some railwaymen—forgetting what is due to their manhood—bestow on those passengers who appear to possess a plentiful supply of this world's goods. True civility is cheap, and calls for little or no strain upon the mental capacity of any man who has to apply it, while showing that attention to passengers which his duties demand; civility—both to the peer and the peasant, giving due deference to each. There are, doubtless, men who undervalue civility because of its cheapness, but I believe they are in the minority; for it must be obvious to all railway servants that they stand no chance of promotion if complaints are continually reaching headquarters of their incivility to the travelling public.

You may often hear opinions pretty freely expressed about the gross incivility of railwaymen; but considering the arduous nature of their duties they will compare favourably with any other section of the community at large. These complaints emanate chiefly from those bustling travellers who, having such a high opinion of their own importance, wish to be waited on hand and foot, to the detriment of other passengers, who have an equal claim to the services of the railway official. Look, for instance, at the position of a porter at one of our large stations on an August Bank-Holiday; the numberless insults incurred by him because he is unable to answer more than one question at one time. After being pulled one way and hauled another for a busy five minutes, is his conduct altogether indefensible because he resents such treatment, and answers sharply and decisively some of the unreasonable inquiries which are made? The booking-clerk, too, may be excused for a slight display of temper if—with an express train due out within a few minutes, and a long row of passengers waiting to be booked—he meets with two or three dilatory travellers who persist in asking questions about cab-fares or some other matter of no immediate importance.

Again, two commercial travellers are heard discussing the merits and demerits of a certain station. One waxes wroth while giving the details of numerous insults received at the hands of the officials employed there, whom he describes as the most ignorant and uncivil lot of men that he ever met with in the whole course of his commercial life. "Well, that is very odd," replies his friend. "My business takes me there many times during the year, and I can safely say that I have always met with the greatest civility, from the highest official down

to the very lowest; in fact, their treatment always gives additional pleasure to my visits there. I may say that wherever I go I never omit to treat the railway servants as men, and by doing so I gain their immediate attention; whereas, if I commenced to bully them as soon as I alighted from the train, I should expect nothing else but incivility in return, and should consider myself the only one to blame in the matter."

Apart from railway life, the busy world of to-day seems to me to have lost much of the olden-time courtesy; for we hear from the ladies on every hand about the lack of interest which some of the men evince in paying those civilities to which the sex naturally consider they are entitled.

Perhaps there is no time—in the sharp struggle for existence, the exciting turmoil of city life—for the exercise of those little social amenities which go such a long way towards softening the dealings of class with class. Why this should be so remains a mystery; for the spread of education ought to increase the use of this most estimable quality, instead of causing its deterioration, as a matter of importance to all.

Uncomfortable Locomotives.

BY A DRIVER, *Great Western Railway.*

THE designers of locomotives intended for service on railroads that have numerous curves ought to take into consideration the importance and necessity of the engineer seeing ahead when the engine is rounding a curve. I have enjoyed the best of opportunities for observing the limited outlook from the cabs of a great many locomotives employed on very crooked roads, where cuttings are numerous, and the impression received is that the practice is becoming general of making a solid line of obstructions from the cab to the smoke-stack. The cabs are now so placed that an engineer cannot step to the left hand to see that all is clear when he is rounding a curve; the duties of a fireman are too arduous to give him any time for keeping a systematic look-out on curves, and so the practice is for the engine to rush along blindly, depending on the good fortune of finding a clear track. I have heard of more than one instance where tail-end collisions have happened that could be directly traced to the engineer not being able to see ahead in rounding a curve. There is a growing sentiment among railroad commissioners to require a third man to be carried on locomotives where the fireman is so located that he cannot keep a look-out ahead. When juries begin to find out that accidents are happening through the engineer being unable to see the reach of the track visible on curves, they will stimulate public sentiment to demand the presence of more eyes on the monster locomotives that are becoming the rule as train haulers.

The proper way to stave off this source of expense is the devoting attention to opening the view for the engineer across the boiler. This can be helped materially by a little attention to the locating of dome and sandbox.

Another thing that demands attention is the location and width of cab. Many cabs are made as if they were intended for Lilliputians, a man of moderate size having to squeeze himself to get in position to reach the working levers. This may be quite comfortable as viewed from the drawing office, and entails no great hardship upon the man who goes in inspecting the arrangement when the engine is cold in the builder's shop. On the road it is a different matter. With hot weather, and the intimate proximity to a hot boiler, the man in the cab is parboiled during a great part of the time he is at work. Is it surprising that the man who is subjected to this ordeal day after day gets convinced that engineers are a poorly-paid class considering the discomforts they have to endure? A very little forethought and no extra expense would make the cab comfortable. Apart from humanitarian considerations, I believe that it would pay railroad companies to effect a reform in the locomotive cabs.

The Bank Clerk's Journey.

By J. B. S.

I SHALL never forget the uncomfortable position that I found myself in through too free use of that unruly member, the tongue. I was a young fellow then, clerk in a London bank. My father was an officer in the army, and he often told us boys that setting each of us up in business or professions was all he could ever do for us, for the scant pittance he would leave behind him must belong solely to my mother and sister. But my brother and I were both energetic and hopeful. So long as each day brought us enough to satisfy our daily wants, we thought little of the future.

One bleak, cold, January morning, I was greatly surprised on my arrival at the bank to find my father pacing up and down before the building. I was not living at home just then, and his presence there made me fear lest something was wrong.

"Philip," he began, "are you in time? Can you spare me three minutes?"

"Yes, sir," I replied, "for a wonder, I see I am ten minutes earlier than I need be."

"You know Mr. Fosberry?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"Well, last night I received a letter from him, after years of silence, in which he asks after you." And he read me the letter.

"What a queer old boy!" I exclaimed. "What does he mean, father?" for I did not exactly understand it.

"Mean! Why, to make you his heir, Philip—his heir!"

"Whew!" said I, blushing; "that's a good idea."

"You must apply for leave and go off at once," my father said. "Strike while the iron is hot. It's a splendid chance, Philip—splendid! Use it well, and your fortune is made."

So I thought, applied for leave, and set off for the Paddington Station soon after, with my ears ringing with a legion of instructions for pleasing old men given me by my fellow-clerks. The only one I could clearly remember was to rise whenever he came into the room, and then eschew every comfortable armchair for fear he should want it. I felt bursting with importance, and actually treated myself to a glass of hot whisky and water at the refreshment saloon.

"Hullo, William!" suddenly cried a voice.

"Why, Jack, what brings you here?" I replied, recognising a friend, Jack Evans.

"I am going down to Gloucester," said he. "Where are you going to?"

"Oh, such luck!" I cried. "I am off beyond Hereford to honour an old gentleman!"

"What?" cried Jack.

"Come along, and I'll tell you all about it," said I. "Second class? Yes, all right. Here we are."

After we were settled in our places an old man got in. He was poorly dressed, and wore a green shade over one eye, while the other looked weak and drooping. We grunted our disapproval at his entrance, and made mutual grimaces, but, as his blind eye was towards us, they were lost to him. As the train moved off, I told Jack my story, which you know already.

"Well done, Philip. Your bread is buttered for you," he exclaimed, when he had heard me to the end. "What a glorious chance! Man alive, I wish I were in your shoes, that's all!"

"Yes, yes, my boy. All right!" I exclaimed. "Well, it's a shame if I don't secure a good smoke now, before my pipe goes out in obscurity. Do you object to smoke, sir?"

This latter question was addressed to the old gentleman in the corner, who appeared a curious mass of old coats, railway rugs, and newspapers.

"I do object very much," was the gruff reply.

"Very sorry, sir," said I. "I'll keep my head out of the window, then."

Shame seizes me when I recall this incident. In lieu of attending to the old man's wishes. I coolly lit my pipe, though I knew the wind would blow the smoke right into his eyes; though I heard him growling with rage, I puffed on heedlessly. I should be sorry to be so rude now, but, you see, I was young and excited.

The short January day was drawing to a close, and very soon we were depending for light on the lamp that hung from the centre of the carriage roof.

Whether it was the example of the old man, who had gone asleep, or the noise of the train, as it sped along, or that our powers of chattering were exhausted, I know not; but anyhow, we, too, began to feel inclined for a nap. But we found the lamp an intolerable nuisance, with its incessantly-flickering light.

"Bother it! Can't we blow it out?" I exclaimed.

"Not if we cracked our cheeks. But I've a notion!" cried ever ready-witted Jack. "Hand me the old boy's hat."

"Whatever for?" as I handed him the article in question.

It was worn and rusty, but well brushed and well shaped.

"To make an extinguisher of," replied Jack; and so saying, he fitted it on to the lamp, making the globe act like the bald head of the owner of the hat.

It fitted to a nicety, and so tightly as to keep it well in its place. The arrangement answered splendidly, and not a glimmer of light was to be seen.

When the train stopped at Swindon we awoke and rushed out of the carriage to get refreshments, quite forgetting our fellow-passenger and his hat. On returning we found that they had both flown. The train started, and when we arrived at Gloucester Jack left me. I had a cold, lonely journey to my destination, a little station just below Hereford. When I arrived it was nine o'clock; a dark, raw night; I was very sleepy and tired. For some moments I could not find my portmanteau; then my hat-box was missing, and while I was searching the guard was exclaiming about the delay of the train. At last it was all found, the guard whistled, the train moved off, and I was standing on a little country platform, in a strange place.

"Any cabs or flies to be got here?" I asked the station-master.

"Dear me, no, sir," was the reply. "But we can get you something down in town. Where is it to, sir?"

"I want to get to Mr. Fosberry's, of Castle Hall," I replied.

I paced the wretched little station till the conveyance came, with my mind full of the coming meeting. I asked the driver how far we had to go.

"How far, sir," said he. "Oh, about four miles!"

I got in, and we bowled along the dark narrow lanes. After half-an-hour's drive we entered some handsome iron gates, and drove into what seemed to me now, in the dim light, an extensive park. The aspect impressed upon me was the idea of a grand estate, and I questioned the driver on the subject.

"Indeed, it is a big place, sir," he replied. "'Tis about fifteen miles round the estate. Eh, Mr. Fosberry's wery rich. People do say he has two hundred thousand pounds to leave, if he's a penny, beside this property."

My driver jumped down and pulled the bell. The peal resounded through the house like the clang of a trumpet. A footman in livery threw open the door, and I was admitted into a hall glowing with light and warmth, and then shown into a brilliantly-lighted drawing-room.

A moment later and the tall footman re-appeared. He apologised for his master's non-appearance, and requested me to obey the instructions of a note which he handed me from a massive silver salver. I tore it open and read:—

"MR. PHIL. FOSBERRY WILLIAMS,—The next time you travel by rail, do not smoke or annoy old gentlemen; do not make the infirmities of age and seeming poverty your laughing-stock; do not tell your friends of your great expectations; do not speak of your crack-brained relatives; do not make extinguishers of old gentlemen's hats; do not nourish vain hopes of inheriting me; and, finally, do not lose any time in leaving for ever the house of your old 'fireworks' of a fellow-traveller.

"PHILIP FOSBERRY.

"P.S.—I enclose a twenty-pound note to pay your expenses."

How I got out of the house, how I got back to the station and spent the night in a wretched inn, how I returned to town and told my enraged relatives my woeful tale, wherein I played such a sorry part, how my abject letter of apology was returned unread, I cannot tell. I only know old Fosberry died worth two hundred thousand pounds, leaving his niece sole heiress, and that I quarrelled with Jack Evans about it; nor have I spoken to Jack since.

An Awkward Predicament.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Great Eastern Railway.*

TRAINS were running a bit late, and we, the platform staff at Bridley Station, were assembled in the porters' room waiting for one that was overdue.

"Not signalled yet," said Jack Carr, the parcels-porter, as he joined our company, with a bundle of letters and a small parcel or two in his hand. Then, scanning the addresses on his parcels, he remarked, "There's one here brought through off the last up train."

"You know all about being 'brought through,' don't ye, Jack?" said Bill Frost, and a laugh went round the room denoting some special significance in the remark.

"Ah! I do, right enough," remarked Jack, "but I don't want to be 'brought through' again."

Some of us knew not what it was Bill's playful sally alluded to, so we plagued Jack to tell us all about it. Jack glanced out of the window and saw the signal still stood at danger, and then began.

"This happened before we knew anything of 'Privilege tickets' and when we had to steal our rides, or else pay the full

fare like an ordinary passenger, for passes were hard to get hold of. But lawk! we ~~were~~ had to get about pretty fair, and the collectors didn't use to take any notice of company's chaps riding about chance times. The worst we had to fear was tumbling across the district superintendent in our travels, for we then stood a chance, not only of getting into hot water ourselves, but also of getting an old mate into trouble for doing us a kindness. Well, my missis, she wanted me to go down to Arkton to do a bit o' shopping for her, and I slipped down by the 7.16 train, intending to come back just after nine. The youngsters had been very inquisitive about what time I should be home, for no doubt they expected I should bring something for them, and they got special permission that night to sit up till I got home. But nine o'clock came and I didn't arrive; ten o'clock came and still I had not turned up, and as the youngsters were dropping off to sleep downstairs, the missis made them go to bed. She herself waited up, wondering and wondering whatever was wrong, and why I did not return according to bargain. There's no telling what she thought during that weary anxious time of waiting, but it was three o'clock next morning when I put in an appearance. The cause of delay was as follows: like this parcel in my hand I had been 'carried through' and had to return as best I could by one of the night goods trains. Oh, no; I was not drunk or stupid. You see, it was like this: I got on the platform at Arkton Station about ten minutes before my train was due out, and old Ted Appleby happened to be rear guard. 'Hallo, Jack,' said he, as I passed his brake with two or three small parcels under my arm, 'going up?' 'Yes,' I replied, and in a jiffy I jumped into Ted's brake, thinking to have a chat with him on my way home. You all know how dearly Ted likes a yarn. Well, he went along his train making ready for a start, and people were hurrying up, for the hands on the clock's face showed that in two minutes more we were due away, when all of a sudden Ted came to the brake door, and said to me, 'Jack, what's your guv'nor doing about at this time o' night. I see he's on the platform, and, behold, he's now coming down this way. You'd better get behind those boxes and lay down till we start.' No sooner said than done, and as I laid low I thanked my lucky stars that time was up immediately, and that I need not remain in hiding long. 'Right away,' I heard someone shout, and then came the sound of Ted's whistle, followed by the engine's whistle, and we began to move. I kept quiet, thinking to abide where I was till we had got quite out of the station. I heard Ted step into the brake, but—what's that? Why there's someone else got in as well, and I can hear Ted speaking to his companion, whoever he is. I listen intently, and there is no mistaking that voice. 'Tis none other than that of our district superintendent—the very man I dreaded most to meet. Well, here was a pretty nickle to be in, and as they say at the police court, I 'keenly felt my undignified position.' Ah! it's all very well to laugh, but I can tell you it was no laughing matter for me then. The superintendent was evidently going my road, and, like me, he had taken to the guard's brake, only I had had an invitation and he

hadn't, though perhaps he might argue that he had a right there and I hadn't. I then began to wonder how far he was going up, for it was a sure mark that while he was prowling about I should have to sing small. I had made matters worse, you see, by hiding up, for with a civil growl and caution not to do the likes again I might have got over the original offence of travelling 'without ticket or pass,' but I dared not face him now. My station was No. 3 from the starting point, and there was the hope that the "super." was not going beyond No. 1 or No. 2, and then I could manage No. 3 right enough. But suppose he went beyond No. 3 how was I to get on? Well, we jogged along and Ted came down my way with his hand-lamp sorting and squaring up his luggage and parcels, and probably wishing me at Hanover or somewhere else. I noticed he stacked up the boxes and bags so as to make my hiding-place still more secure. Soon we arrived at No. 1 station Ted got out, but not so the superintendent. No. 2 station was reached and the same process was gone through—the superintendent still remaining. Then came station No. 3, my own familiar haunt—in short, this very block of buildings; and there was I a prisoner, afraid to move, in a guard's brake, on the up line. My superintendent kept his perch, and it was as plain as a pikestaff that he had not yet reached his destination. I had reached mine, but dare not say so. Jim Scotter, who used to be stationed here, was on night duty at the time, and I heard his familiar voice shouting along the train, and then he came to the brake door to ask Ted if there was 'anything out.' Jim little thought that I was hiding inside, but there was no help for it. I had not only myself to think about; there was Ted, the guard, who would get called over the coals if I owned up as a 'stowaway.' There was I within a few minutes' walk of my own house, where wife and youngsters were waiting in expectation for my return, and yet I was forced to be carried against my will miles away from home. You can judge my feelings as we steamed away, and really my cramped position began to make me feel anything but comfortable. Besides, my inner chimes began to play, for I went down to Arkton without my tea, and bargained for a good supper when I got home. I reasoned within myself that 'twere better for me to have paid my fare, or have let the missis go and do her marketing herself, or have purchased what we wanted at enhanced prices in the village, than to go through all this ordeal. While these reflections were tantalising me we pulled up at station No. 4, and blow me if the superintendent didn't get out there. I heard him bid Ted "Good-night," and hardly had we started again when Ted burst out laughing and urged me to 'get up out of that.' I didn't want to be told twice to get up, I can assure you, for a stretch was one thing I longed most for. We joked over the affair as if no one was inconvenienced till we got to station No. 5, where I parted company with Ted, and there I waited patiently for a down goods to come back with. Ted never forgot that trip I had with him, and you may often hear him twitting me about being 'brought through in error.' Sometimes when I am putting my parcels in his brake he will—hallo, look up, mates, the train is running in, and none of us noticed the signal drop."

“Our” Railway.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Metropolitan District Railway.*

“YOURS seems to be a model line!” remarked a friend of mine the other day, in response to a description of various interesting items connected with the company in whose service I have the honour to be. I pumped up the modest blush that so well becomes my style of facial architecture (thereby confirming my friend’s oft-expressed opinion that I have indeed a “blooming cheek”), and softly admitted that we were some “per-tickler nuts” in the railway line.

Of course, we have no claim to be considered a “great” line, so far as mere mileage is concerned; in fact, to quote the servant girl’s deprecatory excuse, when her mistress mildly objected to her adding an illegitimate baby to the establishment, “It’s only a little ‘un,” but the traffic on it at certain parts of the day is enormous. When you realise that twenty passenger trains are run on each of the two sets of metals in one hour, you will perhaps appreciate the fact that neither signalmen nor platform staff have much time to devote to trimming their finger nails, or meditating on those heavenly joys that should never be forgotten, even while engaged on worldly duties. Towards middle day, unfortunately for the company’s finances, things slacken out considerably. City men and workmen have reached their destinations, and it is principally women out on shopping excursions who are travelling at this time. These are usually content to squander their pennies on a ride in the ubiquitous ‘bus in preference to taking the trains, although the latter are, in spite of sneers to the contrary, fairly well lighted on our system. The atmospheric evils, too, are grossly exaggerated, although I cannot quite agree with that wonderful romancer who once described it as a “daylight route.” It is rather hard, after all, to account for the number of passengers who prefer to ride in a slow ‘bus, which shakes and jolts along the streets in a way calculated to shatter the nerves of any ordinary person, instead of being rushed expeditiously and quietly to their destination. The little “District” was second in the good cause of introducing that remarkable combination of the electrical and mechanical lock now so well known as the S.Y.X. gear. Years ago, with considerable foresight, the powers that were saw its merits, and had it fitted through the most important section of the line. The wisdom of that course is plainly proved by the fact that a number of our big companies are fitting it through their systems as quickly as possible, but not before, unfortunately, some of them have paid large sums in compensation to injured passengers, hurt in accidents that would have been prevented had the “Sykes” system of locking been in use.

I do not know of any company more willing to try any gear that, it is claimed, will conduce to the safety or comfort of its

patrons. There is hardly any question that under the present management the passenger is studied and coaxed in every way; and I cannot help believing that, in a few years' time, the line will emerge from its present unfortunate pecuniary condition into a more prosperous existence.

The subject nearest to our hearts is, How are the servants treated? Here, again, I have nothing but praise. The signal cabins, with few exceptions, are worked on the eight-hour system, and signalmen are paid for Sunday labour. Guards, collectors, examiners, and porters work rather longer; in fact, they make what is practically a ten-hour day. These, again, are paid for Sunday "on"; and the absence of anything like serious discontent with the conditions of service among all classes is really remarkable.

In social matters the superior officials hold views that do equal credit to their hearts and heads. From the manager and his lady downwards, they all seem to have the welfare of the men at heart. Year after year Mrs. Powell labours indefatigably to organise concerts to help swell the favourable balance of a much-needed Benevolent Fund. A fête, too, is arranged every year, on alternate turns of duty, and the spectacle of half the traffic servants, in addition to the engineering staff, hobnobbing together is something that does one's heart good to witness. Special trains convey the servants to the rendezvous of these gatherings.

Privilege tickets for ourselves and families are ancient history with us. For twopence we travel from one end of the line to the other and back, and for threepence, owing to the kindness of the Metropolitan Railway, we are allowed to journey to and from Chesham, in Buckinghamshire, a distance there and back of something like fifty odd miles. Take it altogether, I do not think we have much to grumble at.



Our Ticket Collectors.

BY A CLERK, *London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway.*

THE ticket collector plays an important part in the working of all railways. By some companies they are called "examiners," which, indeed, they are; but on the southern lines they are styled "ticket collectors." The duties connected with this particular branch of the service are various, if not very intricate. At what are called collecting stations, such as Willesden Junction, Kentish Town, Finsbury Park, East Croydon, Grosvenor Road, and other places near the great termini, the collectors receive tickets from the passengers as they are seated in the carriages on their arrival from distant parts. At the starting points of the trains, and at wayside stations, the duty is performed at the entrance barriers and exits. There is also a staff of travelling ticket collectors, but this very useful corps of officials is not generally adopted by great railways.

The "flying scud," as it is sometimes humorously called, is worth a few words of explanation. We will take one of the southern companies' lines, where, owing to the enormous number of season-ticket holders who travel within a distance of 10 or 15 miles of London, the system is well known, though not very highly appreciated by the travelling public. The Brighton company's travelling ticket-collecting staff numbers six officials, including the inspector in charge. Notice is given to them beforehand by the inspector as to the stations selected for the coming week, and the trains to be examined. A train may be crammed by first and second-class season-ticket holders, and the raid upon it is certain to meet with success; that is to say, perhaps half-a-dozen passengers may be found in firsts who only hold second-class tickets. From these persons, probably, excess fares are demanded from the point of starting of the train, and if the defaulter is found travelling without his season-ticket, his name and address are taken with a view to verifying his statement that he has left it at home, or lost it, as the case may be.

A good deal of discretion and tact are requisite in a ticket collector. He should be polite and civil in his demeanour, for the season-ticket community are, generally speaking, a huffy class, and it is very disagreeable to them to be found out, and, perhaps, unceremoniously turned out of a first-class compartment with a second-class ticket. A great deal of the ticket collector's time is spent in the police courts in consequence of these uncertain raids. Scarcely a day passes without a charge of fraudulent travelling being heard in the London or suburban police courts; and the usual penalty of 40 shillings fine and costs is inflicted. In some cases the defaulter (who, by the bye, looks upon these things as very trivial) has frequently travelled up and down the

line, calling out "season" at the barriers for some considerable time after the date on which his ticket has expired. At other times the ticket holder has travelled beyond his proper station; while, more frequently, the traveller has not taken a ticket at all.

One of the most disagreeable tasks a ticket collector has to perform is to travel, perhaps for 50 miles without a stoppage, with a suspected defaulter to see whether he produces a ticket, or what excuse he frames, on arrival at his destination; or, maybe, to ascertain his address. On one occasion of this kind the servant in uniform was threatened more than once that he would be thrown out of the window. In many instances ticket collectors have met with violent assaults in the execution of their duty from drunken or irascible travellers. Great horse-racing events are occasions of much trouble and anxiety to the staff. The lower orders of the sporting fraternity are, perhaps, the roughest class he has to deal with. They are up to a hundred tricks for evading the scrutiny of the collector. Sometimes they hide under the seats, and it is a common occurrence to find two or three of these men in a compartment without tickets or money on the arrival of a "race train" at a collecting station, and it is only when the stationmaster threatens to take the carriage in which they are seated from the train that the friends of the would-be swindler pay his fare. Not long since a carriage had to be uncoupled before the occupiers would pay up.

The public have little idea of the large number of what are called "refusals to pay" which are daily sent to headquarters by the ticket collecting staff, even on a railway of moderate mileage. The "refusal to pay" form is a printed foolscap sheet containing the date, name, and address of the traveller, and the amount demanded of him. Many of these cases are those of passengers who have lost or mislaid their tickets. Numerous false addresses are given, so no more is heard of these parties. It is, therefore, part of the duty of a ticket collector, if he doubts the word of any of the passengers, to follow them and ascertain their correct addresses, and in cases of false information a prosecution usually follows. There have been instances, but they are now comparatively rare, where obstinate passengers have been at once hauled off to the police station.

Ticket collectors, besides being polite and courteous, should also be quick and intelligent. A few evenings ago I was a witness of an amusing dispute between a collector and an Italian vagrant, who carried a monkey in a small box. The collector espied the box under the man's coat, and demanded the fare for it. The Italian pretended to be quite ignorant of it, and protested that he was no monkey; but, nevertheless, he had to pay. Ticket collectors have to see that nothing passes the barriers, except ordinary luggage, without payment, and to put up with unlimited abuse and bad language, while, if they dare to respond, they are threatened with reports to the manager.

It is part of a ticket collector's duty on some railways to act as stationmaster during the latter's absence on leave, or in cases of sickness; for this, of course, they receive extra remuneration. In not a few instances they perform station inspector's duties, and

on busy occasions work a train as guard, etc. Yet, for all this, their actual wages are small. Some time ago the writer was seated in a train at Croydon while the tickets were being collected. Said one passenger to another, quite seriously, referring to a ticket collector who put his head into the compartment, "I suppose that man receives about £3 per week?" "I should think about that," replied the other; "he deserves it." Fancy a ticket collector receiving a salary of £156 a year! His actual wages were just one-third of that amount. Unambitious ticket collectors remain at their posts all their lives without any promotion whatever, whilst others are appointed head-porters, guards, inspectors, and stationmasters. These men have to pass a medical examination on entering the service, and a nice uniform is provided, with an overcoat for the winter. Their equipment is a hand-lamp, a ticket pouch, and a pair of ticket nippers. These nippers bear a "punch" or distinctive sign for the various railways throughout the country, according to an arrangement made with the Clearing House.

It is necessary for a ticket collector to be keen-sighted and conversant with the many varieties of tickets, paper coupons, and free passes—paper, ivory, silver, or gold—in circulation every day; and he should be quick to detect dates, and also be able to rapidly calculate the amount of excess fare to be paid on tickets for superior classes of carriage. He shares in all the benefits of his more important fellow employees. He has his four or five days' holiday every year, without stoppage of pay, and occasional free railway passes or privilege tickets. He can become a member of the Superannuation, Benevolent, or Insurance Funds, or of the Provident Sick Society. On the southern railways he can have his little plot of garden ground by the side of the line, at a very nominal cost. These by no means small privileges combine to make him a tolerably happy servant of the company to which he belongs, and, accordingly, few of his rank leave the service of their own accord.



A Tight Fit.

BY A STATION MASTER, *London and North Western Railway.*

EVERY stationmaster will I am sure agree with me that it is a wise policy to be on friendly terms with the ganger of the platelayers. Suppose you are at a small country station, the staff consisting of stationmaster and one porter, or signalman; you have five tons of cake or grain in a foreign wagon; you omitted to advise consignee on the night of arrival, hence it is quite likely that a day's demurrage will be incurred. A word to the ganger puts the matter right; his five or six men will soon unload the stuff, the wagon gets away to time, and a sharp letter from headquarters is avoided. In many ways they can help you. Five or six platelayers on a nice frosty morning can turn over a good bit of the stationmaster's garden, which would take him many days to do. When I was first appointed to a station, I was soon on good terms with the ganger. It came about in this way: The first day of my arrival, after we had got the furniture in the house and put things a bit square, I went out to have a look at my new garden. The first thing I saw was a rabbit bolt into a hole. To get a stick, try the length of the hole, put my arm in, pull out the rabbit, break its neck, and "leg" it was the work of moment. "Well done, guv'nor!" shouts someone. Looking up I saw looking over the rails a stout, ruddy-faced man, evidently one of the platelayers; it turned out to be the ganger. "That's not the first you've served like that," he remarked. "No," I replied; "but it's some years since I had hold of a live one. We soon got into conversation on sporting matters. I found Dan was an ardent sportsman; no one could put down a wire or a "pair of boots"—that is, a rabbit trap—better than Dan. He could handle a pike rod, and throw a cast net with the best of them. Many happy hours we spent by the side of the brook that ran past the station. What eels we caught on our night lines, to be sure! and we grassed some jack, too, that would make a cockney sportsman's eyes glisten with delight. But I am wandering—I must go on with my story. When Dan and his men were working near the station I was sure to be with them, watching them at their work, listening to old Dan's long yarns about fox-hunting, balger-baiting, otter-hunting, and all kinds of outdoor sporting matters. One very hot day in July I noticed them at work about a quarter of a mile from the station; they appeared to be more than usually busy. I strolled up and inquired what was up. "Oh," said Dan, "we've got to change this blessed rail; ought to have done it last night, but we got on the spree a bit." "Well, I hope you have got the flagman out all right," I remarked. "Can't

spare one," he replied. "It won't take many minutes to reverse the rail when we've got it out." It however took longer than Daniel bargained for. I wanted to give them a lift round with it. When we got it round, to my surprise it would not go down level with the other rails. "Dash it!" said Dan, "I thought that would be it—it's the expansion." Try all we could, we could not get it down, it appearing to overlap the other rail nearly an inch. One suggested putting water on it; another said cut a bit off, but we had no tools available. The most feasible plan seemed to be to lift up the adjoining rail, and knock them down both together. This was tried; the men laid on with the keying hammers like Vulcan at his forge, but could not get the rails an inch lower; they were six or eight inches above the level, and could not be moved up or down. We were so busy that we had not noticed how the time had flown. Presently some one shouts, "Look up; here she comes!" and sure enough round the curve about three hundred yards away came a passenger train at about forty miles an hour. We instantly drew back; poor old Dan's face went ashen grey. I confess I was frightened. In that brief space of time I was telegraphing for the breakdown gang, rescuing the wounded, attending coroner's inquests, and other matters incidental to a railway accident. Fortunately none of them were required in reality; when the train went over the rails went down with a terrific bang, and beyond twisting the rails a bit, and breaking a fishplate bolt or two, no damage was done. When the train had gone old Dan danced about like a maniac, and, tossing up a half-crown, said: "I will stand a gallon of old Joe Buck's best this blessed night if I live." And—"tell it not at Euston"—in the cool of the evening of that hot July day we sat on Dan's lorry, by the side of the line, smoking our pipes and drinking old Joe's home-brewed—"a drop with the beads on" Dan was wont to call it. The old fellow was so pleased that he would insist on giving us a song; and as he went home up the line I could hear him at intervals rattling out the chorus of an old hunting song. Poor old chap! He has long been laid in his last resting-place in that quiet churchyard, within the sound of those bells he loved to hear. You were a good old sort, Dan; and if you did not go to church so often as some of the long-faced, sanctimonious ones, when you did go you went to pray. I wish I were a poet. I would immortalise you in a poem that should live to the end of all time!



Some Opinions of Medical Men on Cabin Life.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *North Eastern Railway.*

OF the responsibilities of our calling we from time to time hear the semi-authoritative voice of the B. of T. Inspectors, the cool, sympathetic voice of railway directors and managers, and the intermittent wailing tones of the general public.

Much comment has already been made on the effect these various voices have on the work of signalmen. At present I will try to recite a few notes from the profession mentioned in the title regarding the life of the inhabitant of the one-roomed house.

"Long may you dance and sing, and never need a doctor," is an old toast; but how many signalmen who have been "cribb'd, cabin'd, and confin'd" for any length of time have been able always to give the doctor the "all right"? Most of us, I dare say, have at some period been unable to take off the "home," until doctored we again saw the "advance," and lowered it "right away."

Some half-score years ago, a mate—a big, raw-boned "Hielant man"—troubled with indigestion (a common complaint among us), went to a doctor and laid down his case.

The medicine-man questioned him minutely regarding his food, its kind, and time of taking it, length of indoor service, and a great many other things.

When the doctor had heard all, he said :

"I am very sorry that a young man like you, having a large and well-knit frame, should be suffering from this undermining complaint. I am in a hurry to go my rounds, so will write you out a bill of fare, short and simple. Food—Avoid all fatty meats, including cheese (except a little butter on toast or bran-bread); take cocoa if you can, if not, a little weak tea; make it fresh if possible, if not, carry it in a glass vessel; a raw egg switched in boiled milk. Vegetables—Not too many. Fruit—Figs, apples, and half an orange first thing on getting up. Exercise—As much open air as possible; say, a three-mile walk night and morning. There, try that, along with a bottle of tonic which I shall give you, and let me know at the end of a month how you feel. Half-a-crown, please." And, he added, "My dear fellow, I may as well tell you that, reared among your native mountains, a life under glass is not for you."

A few years since, a mate in the same cabin with me applied for an out-door job in the service, stating that his eyesight was failing. We all know that an application on that ground invariably brings a quick shift of some sort. In this case, a relief man was almost immediately sent to take duty until a permanent man was appointed. The "shifted" man was 60 years of age—22 of these spent in cabins. After a few days he

was appointed as signal-lamp man. This was in autumn, and on the approach of winter he got so much out of sorts that he was compelled to visit a doctor. (The old man's faith in the "faculty" was weak.) After examination and inquiry, the medical gentleman told the ex-cabin man that, owing to his habits and age, he could not be transplanted from the protection of a signal-cabin to the exposure of a November blast with any degree of safety. My old mate died in March the following year.

Another, and a different case: Only a short time ago a signalman on a branch line told me of a recent visit he paid to a doctor about his stomach. At the close of the usual string of questions, the old white-haired M.D. said:—

"I'll tell you what you want—it is good hard work; you have too little to do. You say that you were all right while portering; it is coming from an active life to a stand-still one. That is what is playing the mischief with you; it's not a job for a young man at all. I've known these 'hospital branch-cabins, as your own railwaymen term them, for over 20 years, and you are not the first who has come to me from that quarter."

"Here," said the signalman, "I thought the old doctor was preparing for a fight—he danced so around the consulting-room table; when all at once he stopped, and confronted me with the following questions:—

"'Do you study?'

"'Not much, sir.'

"'Do you read any medical books?'

"'No, sir.'

"'That's right; don't do that, it's bad for you. There is nothing seriously wrong with you yet; but take my advice and make an application for a job with a good deal of hard work in it. I happen to know the difficulty you sometimes have in getting transferred to a suitable job or locality; apply to me for a recommendation, if you cannot manage it yourself within a reasonable time. I shall be glad to assist you. Good-day.'"

These opinions are not recorded to frighten men away from cabin life, because whatever views, adverse or favourable, we may hold concerning it, railway companies will always find men willing to live it.

The main object is, ought not every signalman, and would-be signalman, to ask himself the question, Is my constitution adapted for this condition of life? Truly, we resemble closely the plants in this respect—the hot-house reared cannot stand the winter blast, and vice versa; while the vine and the ivy, each in a suitable atmosphere, live to a green old age.



Two Minutes Before Time.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Caledonian Railway.*

“YES, Jack Wilson was one of the best stokers that ever stood beside me on the footplate,” said James Black to me one evening as we sat chatting together after our day’s work was over. Black was a tall, weather-beaten old veteran, and one of the best drivers on the line.

Some years previous to this time Black had been out running the night mail, and the above Jack Wilson was his stoker. While coming home on that particular run a very painful incident occurred, which seriously affected the happiness of Wilson.

However, I shall endeavour to give the story in Black’s own words, or as nearly as possible:—

“We had run the mail from Perth to Carlisle that afternoon, returning to Perth with the north mail in the evening. Wilson was in unusually high spirits all the afternoon. He showed me a letter he had just received that afternoon from our locomotive superintendent, which letter went far to account for his high spirits. This letter informed him that he had been appointed to the position of engine-driver, and that he would be required to commence his new duties on the Monday following. I heartily congratulated him on his promotion, while at the same time I felt sorry at parting with an agreeable mate and a good stoker.

“That marriage of yours won’t be long in coming off now,” I jocularly remarked to him, handing him back the letter. Jack blushed like a girl at my remarks. Then he told me that Jeanie Thomson and he had made it up to get married in a month from that day, if all went well. As Jack had a particular liking for me, he never hesitated to make me a confidant in all his private affairs.

“Jeanie Thomson was a farmer’s daughter, and lived with her parents at a snug little farm a few miles south from Perth, and close beside the railway. Jack Wilson belonged to the same district. Jeanie Thomson and he had been engaged to be married for some time, and it was an understood thing between them that they would get married as soon as Wilson was promoted to be an engine-driver. We used to pass Mossybank—for that was the name of the farm where Jeanie Thomson lived—nearly every day. I therefore saw Jeanie quite frequently. She seemed always to know what train Jack and I would pass with, and she seldom failed to give us a passing wave. At such times Jack’s fine eyes would sparkle, and blushes come over his cheeks, which I could easily see, in spite of the coal grime which was generally upon them. Jack Wilson was proud of his Jeanie, and so he might be. She was about the handsomest girl I ever saw. I think I see her now, with her witching bright eyes and cloud of yellow hair, smiling to Jack and I as we passed with our train.

Upon Wilson telling me that he and Jeanie were to be married shortly, I warmly wished him every success and happiness with Jeanie as his wife.

"We left Carlisle that evening on our homeward run with the mail about 30 minutes late; but, as we had over a hundred and fifty miles run before us, we knew we could easily make up for lost time if we got clear signals. All went well with us on that particular run until we were within a few miles of Perth. At this point I noticed Wilson looking at his watch. He then leaned over to me smiling, and said we should be into Perth two minutes before time. We had a splendid run north with the mail that night; not a signal against us the whole way. By this time we were rapidly nearing Mossybank farm, the light of which we could already see in the darkness ahead of us. Jeanie Thomson always kept a bright light burning in her bedroom when Wilson was on the night mail, and you may be sure Jack Wilson liked better to see that light—Jeanie's light, I used to call it—than any clear signal light on the line. Just as we swept past Mossybank I thought I heard a faint scream on the left side of the engine, and on the opposite side of the line from that on which Mossybank farm was situated. I glanced over at Wilson, but Jack appeared not to have heard any scream, and was looking over the right side of the engine, watching the fast receding light of Jeanie's window. Had we struck anyone in the darkness when passing Mossybank? I asked myself, as I kept looking ahead into the night, with my hand on the regulator. Surely not! Nobody at Mossybank could be crossing the line at such a late hour—close upon midnight—unless out on some special errand. Still, I felt convinced that I had heard a scream when passing the place, although I saw nobody on the line at the time.

"By this time the lights of Perth were in sight, and in a minute or so we drew up at the general station, exactly two minutes before time, as Wilson had previously remarked we would do. As soon as we stopped I lost no time in examining the front part and left side of the engine with my gauge-lamp, to see if there were any traces or marks of any kind of our having struck or run over anyone. I could see no unusual marks upon the two leading wheels, nor yet upon the guard plates in front of them. I felt relieved, and was just concluding that my suspicions of having struck or run over anyone were ill-founded, when the light from my lamp fell upon the left-hand corner of the bufferbeam of the engine, and I observed something hanging from the beam. On bringing the lamp close to it I found it to be a lock of soft yellow hair, caught in a crack in the wood of the beam. A cold shudder crept over me as I looked upon the lock of hair, and I at once jumped to the conclusion that this lock of yellow hair belonged to Jeanie Thomson, and to nobody else. No one but Jeanie had such beautiful hair. My God! could it have been Jeanie Thomson we had struck in passing Mossybank when I heard the scream? Such a thought was too horrible. I then hastened on to the engine and showed Wilson the lock of hair, and told him about hearing the scream.

Jack examined the lock of hair closely, becoming quite pale and agitated while doing so. 'Jim,' he said to me, 'I fear something bad has happened at Mossybank to-night. I'll run up that length and see if there is anything wrong as soon as we get our engine into the shed.'

"On arriving at Mossybank poor Wilson soon learned that our worst fears were only too surely and sadly verified. Jeanie Thomson was dead—struck on the head by the engine of the down night mail. Her poor parents were almost beside themselves with grief, while Wilson was no less affected. His bonnie Jeanie—his heart's idol, whom he loved so fondly and was so proud of—was now a lifeless corpse! All his happiness and enjoyment of life seemed gone from him for ever.

"Old Mr. Thomson explained to him the cause of Jeanie being out at such a late hour. She had been out visiting a friend of hers, a girl about her own age, who had been ill for a considerable time, and was confined to bed. Jeanie sometimes stayed well into the night with her sick friend, making her happy, and the night to seem short, with her cheery talk. It was when returning from her friend's house, which was only a short distance from Mossybank, that the poor girl met her death. Mr. Thompson had gone out shortly after the down night mail passed, intending to accompany his daughter home from her friend's house, when he found her body on the side of the line. Jack Wilson never got over the death of Jeanie Thomson. He resigned his situation on the railway, and seemed to have lost all heart for his work. He went to stay a while with his old folks out near Mossybank, intending in a short while to sail for the Cape, and try his fortune there. It was thought that an entire change of scene might lighten his sorrow, and help him to get over the loss of Jeanie Thomson. But poor Wilson was not destined to see the Cape. In a short time his health fairly broke down, and he followed Jeanie Thomson to the grave just six months after the poor girl had met her death.

"I went out to see him a short time before he died. I cannot tell you how much it grieved me to see my old mate, once so bright and cheery and full of life, now a mere shadow of his former self, and gradually drawing nearer death. I remember well the last words he said to me: 'Jim,' he said, 'had we not been running two minutes before time with the mail that night Jeanie Thomson would not have been killed.'"



The Village Magnate.

By A GUARD, *London and North Western Railway.*

WHEN there is such a large army of travellers continually passing through our busy centres as at the present day, there are many railwaymen who, when on duty, have exceptional opportunities afforded them of observing the characteristic traits of the human race. This is more especially the case with those gentlemen who are holders of "season tickets"; for, as they are nearly always travelling within the same radius throughout the year, they become well known to those railway servants with whom they are brought into daily contact.

Amongst them may be found many business men, who, having given the best part of their lifetime to hard work, have now retired on a competency, wherewith to enjoy the fruits of their labour, and devote their few remaining years to pleasure.

Their method of doing so is to purchase small estates in the country, and by living on them they blossom into country squires of a minor degree, far different from those of the old school.

In this way there may be several readers who are possibly acquainted with some individual who, from his purse-proud and overbearing manner towards them, coupled with his rigid deportment towards the rest of the travelling public, fancies he has now attained the goal of his ambition, and thus aspires to fill the proud position of a village magnate.

In his everyday life he proceeds by many arbitrary measures to awe his dependents into utter subjection, and enacts that the parishioners shall duly acknowledge his approach—as they do the village clergyman—by the usual deferential touch of the hat from the men, or by that spasmodic jerk of the body which is usually termed a "curtsey" from the women. As it will not be necessary, however, to follow the most potent signor in his daily perambulations round the parish, we will view him in his dealings with those railway servants who have the misfortune to be continually at his beck and call. In the first place, being, perhaps, a retired provision dealer, he is fully impressed with the idea that his knowledge of the technical and practical working of our railways is "A 1"; in fact, that he knows as much about them as he does of the various constituent parts of margarine and the best "Dosset."

In the second place, being a season-ticket holder, he imagines that this privilege confers upon him the position of a sort of general manager; and, as he possesses a special aptitude for finding fault, he is always exercising it for the purpose of bringing punishment on those who are least able to bear it. He is continually poking his nose into matters which do not concern him in the slightest degree, and from the way in which he inundates the superintendent's office with reports (the majority

of them about the most trivial affairs imaginable) he seems fully determined to give his importance a most thorough ventilation, and at the same time prove himself an unmitigated nuisance to all concerned. To the officials at the station nearest his residence he is a perpetual bugbear, whose approach is naturally dreaded, owing to his overbearing officiousness. While he is waiting for the morning train, by which he travels into town, he beguiles the time in making the stationmaster's life a misery to him by the number and variety of his complaints.

The conversation begins something after this style on the appearance of the stationmaster: "Good morning, sir!" "Oh, good morning, Brown! I expected a most important parcel down from London yesterday, and I find it has not yet arrived. If I don't receive it to-day I shall prefer a claim against the company for damages, owing to delay. It is a very extraordinary thing that in my dealings with your company there always appears to be a dilatory method of working somewhere, which prevents me from receiving my parcels in due course. I have been looking, too, round the waiting-rooms this morning, and I find them in a most unsatisfactory condition. I shall make it my duty on my arrival in town to see the superintendent, and report the matter."

Here the conversation ends, owing to the arrival of the train. While the station business is being transacted, the guard is receiving his daily dressing down; but as he has already become accustomed to the whole routine of complaints the tirade is not unexpected. He has by this time got to know them all by heart, owing to the constant repetition—"the dirty condition of the carriages, the smokers using non-smoking compartments for smoking purposes, the train running behind time, when it is up to time, and *vice versa*," and a lot of others, which only a man of this description would care to notice or make a fuss about.

What a change, however, awaits him on his arrival in town! for he has left his own little world behind him, and has now become what we might term a mere nonentity. Instead of the obsequious greetings, the bows and "curtseys" of his dependents, he passes along the street unnoticed, only a unit amongst the mighty mass of busy workers, each man with mind intent upon his own business.

Here let us leave him in his true position, as a man amongst men, and not as a sort of demi-god in a little social world of his own creation, where his every look and call is law, which cannot be ignored for fear of incurring his displeasure.



Railways: Their Influence on British Life.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *London and North Western Railway.*

THE first idea of a modern railway had its origin at a colliery, nearly two hundred years ago.

In order to lighten the labour of the horses at this colliery, the colliers laid straight pieces of wood into the road, and wagons were found to run so much easier, that one horse could draw four or five wagons, whereas, before the wood was laid, one wagon was considered to be a load for each horse. The next step was nailing plates of iron on the wooden rails, to prevent them from rotting, which gave them, for the time, the name of "Plate-way roads." Then James Outram made still further improvements, which were called "Outram roads," or "Tram roads," and tramways very soon came into general use at the English collieries.

But as yet nobody had thought of self-going teams, until in 1814 George Stephenson's "Puffing Billy" made its appearance, and, after numerous alterations had been made, it was found to answer better than horse power.

In September, 1822, the Stockton and Darlington Railway was opened, and a great many came to see the new mode of travelling. The opposition was strong. Old England against Young England, and the counter-currents of old and new ideas.

In those days a "travelling-engine" seemed almost a miracle, and when one day a race came off between a locomotive and a coach it was regarded as a great triumph that the locomotive reached its destination first, leaving the coach one hundred yards behind. So much for the superiority of railway over coach-roads.

Little by little, however, railways were lengthened and engines improved, till at length they came to be regarded as absolute necessities. People soon found out that time was saved, money and labour were saved, and that coal and merchandise of every description could be obtained cheaper than before, and, what was better still, obtained in sufficient quantities to satisfy the growing industry and necessities of men, and with cheapness were combined comfort and safety.

It was not long before the railways began to extend so much that public opinion began to turn in their favour, and then one of the greatest influences of railways on English life was seen; everybody wanted land near the railway, and, therefore, land near the railway rapidly rose in value, until bit by bit land was bought and turned into railways running the length and breadth of England.

Railways have, therefore, been, and still are, very beneficial to English life. They have, as it were, civilised and enlightened people by bringing them into contact with each other, on a much larger and broader scale than could have been possible prior to the advent of the railways, thereby enlarging their knowledge and range of ideas, through the medium of trade, commerce, and conversation.

Railways have also opened out a large field for the employment of men from agricultural districts, whose labour has, in a great measure, been superseded by machinery. They have brought towns and villages and numerous outlying districts into close communication with each other, and have, in many instances, caused what were once poor, straggling villages to flourish into large and busy towns. Take Rugby, Crewe, Birmingham, and Walsall as instances. Rugby, at one time, was (before the railways were constructed) merely a straggling Warwickshire village; but now, through the influences of its railway services, it has attained the dignity of a county town, and now finds employment in its railway, mechanical, etc., works, for hundreds of men, most of whom would, but for the development of railways, most probably be following agricultural pursuits. Then again, look at Crewe, with its extensive railway works, which employ thousands of hands. What would those men be doing if there had been no railways? Again, look at Birmingham, with its trades and industries of almost every description. What would it have been without its railways? Probably what it was before the railways were connected with it—a quiet country place of not very much importance; but now, thanks to the railway, it is proudly called the “Capital of the Midlands,” and as such it finds employment for a very large number of mechanics and working tradesmen, who, but for the railways, would certainly not have found such employment in England. Then, again, look at Walsall, which (although undoubtedly a long way behind the times) is certainly very much advanced to what it would have been had not the railways opened out facilities for its saddlers’ ironmongery, harness, leather, and coal and iron industries. And so it has been with the majority of our large towns and cities, which would, but for the railways, have remained small, insignificant places from a business point of view.

It must, however, be admitted that railways are not an unmixed blessing, inasmuch as they have destroyed, or rather rendered unlovely, great tracts of country and much beautiful scenery, which, to lovers of nature, has proved to be no inconsiderable disadvantage, and they have proved themselves to be a source of nuisance and annoyance, to say nothing of danger, to the general public, by the numerous level crossings which are placed at short distances along all the railways in England.

The advantages of railways, however, more than counterbalance their disadvantages, and seeing that this has been proved by the greater facilities afforded to the travelling and trading public, it is evident that their influence on English life has been, and now is, decidedly beneficial.



Sketches of Railway Life.—The Booking Clerk.

“**Y**OU’LL perhaps forgive my having watched you so closely all the time you were booking that train? I saw you look past the passengers at me as if you thought me odd, and, if you like, I will tell you my motive; indeed, if my curiosity—there, the cat’s out of the bag—if my curiosity is to be satisfied entirely, I must tell you, because I want to know something. First, let me say, however, I have observed that it has been almost an invariable practice with booking-clerks, when I have laid down a sovereign on asking for a ticket, and have required change, that the ticket has been stamped, thrown to me, then, before I have got my change, my money has been either swept into the cash-drawer or on one side, out of my reach; and I have always thought it a reasonable precaution for a clerk to take, for, supposing I am dishonest, I might take my money back. But I noticed that you stamped the ticket, laid it down till you got the change ready; then, whilst with one hand you deposited ticket and change together before the passenger, with the other you removed the sovereign, if it was one, and kept it under your middle finger until he had counted his change and left the window. At first, I thought of suggesting to you that the other was the better plan, and then, following a maxim I have found useful in life—namely, not to treat anyone as less wise than myself until I have proved him to be so—I determined to ask you if you had any special reason for doing as you did. Now, if it is not too impertinent a question, had you?”

“Yes, sir. My reason was that if the sovereign was snatched up again, it shouldn’t be after I had parted with the ticket: and, further, it was to avoid disputes as to the value of the coin I had taken, which is a form of fraud sometimes attempted, whilst it is frequently alleged by perfectly honest people that I have been paid something that I have not.”

“Still, anyone might pick up his money after having laid it down.”

“Let him.”

“I see; so long as he did not cheat you out of the ticket he might say what he liked?”

“Precisely.”

“I hope I’m not wasting your time?”

“Not at all, sir. Will you come into the office and sit by the fire?”

“Thank you . . . I suppose, except the sight of new faces, there is not much change in duties like yours?”

“No; only a dispute such as we have been talking of, or about my having broken a counterfeit coin. Somehow, people regard it as a loss when their bad money is destroyed; and they do not hesitate to charge me with impudence.”

“Do the company give you credit for any you may take?”

“No; I have to make it good, if one may say so.”

"Can't you prosecute people for offering it?"

"I believe not; unless the same people have offered it either to us or others previously, or when they are known to be connected with utterers of counterfeits. I once assisted in the capture of two such people."

"May I ask how?"

"In this way: Complaints had been made to the police of bad money having been circulated in the town, and an inspector was sent into this office to keep an eye upon the coins tendered for fares. He wished to book the passengers; and it just shows what rubbish will be accepted as probable about the characters men of his calling assume. He was at sea directly he was asked a question about the train service; and the first passenger, who, after having his change tendered, substituted another coin for the one he had laid down, filled the mind of the inspector with such strong suspicion that, allowing his professional instincts play, he assisted in the development of what he was convinced was an attempt to 'ring the changes' so much that the passenger sharply asked whether he was employed by the police or the railway company. I therefore took his place and he mine, where he sat biting his nails and nursing his chagrin, as you will readily understand he well might, for if the conversation had been heard by the people whom he wanted they would scarcely bring their wares to our market. I was on the point of closing the window, it being on the stroke of train-time, when a young woman asked for a ticket, laying down a half-sovereign, and saying, 'Be quick, please; I'm afraid I shall miss the train.' I placed the coin on one side in front of the ticket-case, which you see comes quite up to the window, and pointed towards it with my forefinger; then I made a spread of silver on the counter, and smilingly intimated to the young lady that I couldn't give her change. 'Oh dear,' she said, 'I shall be left behind.' She then took half-a-crown from her purse, and handing it to me asked for the half-sovereign to be returned to her. Meanwhile, the inspector, with a book under his arm and pen behind his ear, having seen my signal, sauntered towards the door. Turning to him, I said, 'Thompson, tell them to hold on a minute for this lady'; then I gave her her change, along with the half-sovereign, and she ran to the train, where 'Thompson' was telling a young fellow who was fidgety about her that she would be there directly. But neither she nor he travelled by it. Both half-sovereign and half-crown were counterfeit."

"Are your accounts difficult?"

"No; they are simplicity itself. The tickets being numbered consecutively, the difficulty between commencing and closing numbers is the number issued."

"One reads sometimes of defalcations. If it isn't a fair question, don't answer, but I should like to know how they have been done?"

"Oh, you're quite welcome to know. Issues have been made from back instead of commencing numbers; but they are discovered directly our issue slips and the other stations' collected tickets—which are sent in daily—are checked at the audit office. Wrong calculations have served their turn for a short time;

undercasting a column, and more frequently bringing over to another page less than the total at the foot of the preceding one, have done duty. But they inevitably come to light at the monthly balance, and might at any moment if the clerk in charge were to check. Of course, if he were doing it himself there would be no check; and unless a surprise visit were paid by the station auditor it might go on for a month. He, however, does pay such visits; he is always unexpected, and by the same token he is always expected. Probably it is to this fact that defalcations are less common than one would guess, considering the extent of business done and the number of people employed in it. Another mode of embezzlement that has been tried is for the clerk here and the ticket-collector at another station to colloque for the tickets to be returned after having been used, and for them to be re-issued, the delinquents dividing the spoil between them. My predecessor had a case of another sort, and it was strongly tinged with romance. He was engaged to a young lady who had had another suitor besides himself—a grocer. She was the daughter of a widow in poor circumstances, and had only one brother, who was a junior clerk in this office, and he had formed bad acquaintances. One evening when the lovers were out together, the lady gave the gentleman a parcel of tickets, which she had found at home, and begged him to look after her brother, who, she was afraid, was doing something wrong. The tickets were for a place where a great political demonstration had been held that day. He, therefore, took her home, and then came to the office. Upon turning to the train-book, he found fifteen hundred tickets to that place accounted for, the closing number being 2.501; and in the rack and stock drawers were all from that number to the end of the supply, as shown in the stock-book. Those in the parcel, therefore, were clearly duplicates; they began at 2.801, and there were seven hundred of them. He hurried to the lad's home immediately on making the discovery, and succeeded in frightening him into the confession 'that with the aid of an associate, who was apprenticed to a printer, he had procured a thousand tickets to go into issue as soon as the number of people booked should reach a respectable figure, and he had issued three hundred, the money obtained for which he had paid gambling debts with. So that the issue slip and collected tickets should not betray him, he had determined to avail himself of the facility with which a 5 may be made to look like an 8, and he had purposed writing the figure so that in the closing number for that day it should be taken for eight, assuming that the clerk at the audit office would be guided as to what it really was by the number of tickets shown as issued, viz., eighteen hundred, and in the same way in making it his commencement number for the next day it should be taken for a five. To repay the amount was beyond the means of the widow, who, with her daughter, was shedding copious tears; and she therefore tried a chance shot at her prospective son-in-law, who was standing

undecided what to do between affection and duty. In this way she did it. 'Perhaps, dear, Mr. — (the grocer) would lend me the money, if you were to ask him'; and the girl innocently replied, 'Oh, I will go at once!' "No, you won't," said her young man. 'I will let you have it, and welcome; but it won't save Jim from being proceeded against.' 'Oh,' moaned the girl, 'the disgrace! and Jim will be ruined past all hope.' So the upshot was, the lover's scruples were overborne, and he went back to the office, where he altered the figures in the train-book to 2,801, showing the issue to be eighteen hundred, destroyed the seven hundred duplicates and three hundred original tickets for which duplicates had been substituted, and paid in the money that was short."

"What became of Jim?"

"He was indisposed the next day, and didn't come to work; nor did he afterwards."

"How did the printer manage the numbering of the tickets?"

"As he managed to number those for football matches."

"I am much indebted to you for an interesting chat. Good morning."

"Good morning, sir."

Does it Pay to Cultivate Garden Allotments?

BY A WAGON EXAMINER, *London and North Western Railway.*

AS a watch is useless without the mainspring, so is the life of any man who does not possess that brilliant virtue, "industry." But, I am proud to say, on the authority of those who are in a position to know, as well as from my own personal experience, that it is a special characteristic of railway men. The notion of bettering one's mental and social position by sitting still and brooding over circumstances has long been abandoned by the railway man. He has realised the fact that, if he is to better his position in life, it requires that he must have an eye to business; especially the man who has a wife and family whose existence depends upon his exertions. Therefore, I think that all true-hearted railway men should be animated with a burning desire for each other's welfare; and, if it lies within their power to lend a helping hand, or offer a bit of advice which will prove to be beneficial to any of their fellow-workers, it is their duty to do so. It is with that object in view that I avail myself of the opportunity of placing

the following suggestions before those of your readers (and they are numerous) who try to derive some little remuneration through the cultivation of garden allotments.

A question I have often heard asked among railway men is, "Does it pay to rent allotments for the cultivation of garden produce?" I answer, Yes, if, in the first place, you do not pay an extortionate rent for the land, and, secondly, that you utilise the whole of the land to the best possible advantage. My recommendation is that you take a piece of land about twelve rods, which I think is quite sufficient for any railway man to cultivate in the few spare hours he has at his disposal. Having procured the land, commence as soon as convenient to get it in readiness for its intended crop by giving it a liberal supply of manure. Then, of course, the question comes, "What kind of produce is likely to pay the best?" This I leave, sir, for those of your readers who are interested in the subject to determine for themselves, as every man knows best for himself what he most needs for his own family requirements; and I also take it for granted that he has an idea which kinds of produce generally yield the most profit and are easiest to dispose of. But, sir, what I most desire to point out is the fact that it is possible to get fully rewarded for all the expense and labour incurred from a source apart from the value of the crop altogether.

In most of our towns, and in local districts especially, there are established horticultural societies, which have for their principal object the encouragement of allotment gardening; and this they do by holding an exhibition annually at some time during the summer and autumn months, and at which they offer valuable prizes for the best specimens of different varieties of garden produce. My advice is to ascertain as early as possible the name and address of the secretary of the society in the locality in which you reside, and ask him to supply you with a schedule of the prizes which the committee of the society has decided to offer at the forthcoming show, as they are generally issued early in the spring for the convenience of intending exhibitors. This I hold to be important, for the following reasons: First, because it affords you an opportunity of knowing the precise date which is fixed for the exhibition to take place, and also which varieties of produce they offer the best prizes for, and this enables you to form a pretty good idea as to about the required time for planting and sowing, and to give special attention to the cultivation of the varieties you require, so as to have them sufficiently advanced towards maturity against the proper time. Secondly, it will be found that the prize schedules of many of the societies mentioned bear the announcement from some of our leading firms of seedsmen that they will offer valuable money prizes for the best specimens of different kinds of produce which have been grown from seeds purchased direct from them. So that by purchasing your seeds from some of these different firms it not only enables

you to compete for these prizes, but you are less liable to being imposed upon by having palmed on to you seeds of an inferior quality. as is very often the case in purchasing them from the different chemists' shops and small seedsmen in some of our local towns. In fact, that has always been my experience. Now the above method is the one that I adopted years ago, and, after a long experience, I am able to bear witness to the fact that it is both healthful and interesting, and that it well pays for every little trouble that it involves. I have known others besides myself, whose position in life is exactly the same as my own, who, after having competed at one single exhibition, and reckoned up their accounts, have found that they have cleared an amount sufficient not only to enable them to pay the rent for their land and the cost of manure, seeds, etc., but to leave a nice little balance in hand, which they have put in their pockets, and with a smile on their countenance they have joyfully expressed a wish that they were as well paid for all the labour they performed as they had been for that little which they had bestowed on their garden allotment. In placing such facts as those I have mentioned before those of your readers who cultivate allotments, I sincerely hope that they may offer some inducement towards getting them to adopt this method, which, if intelligently carried out cannot but prove to be a thoroughly successful one. I do not think it necessary to say anything here about the different rules which have to be observed in connection with the different societies, as the prize schedules will be found to contain all the information required in that direction; but there is one thing I would mention with regard to selecting different specimens of produce for competition. It must be borne in mind that it is not always the largest that win, but, on the other hand, my experience has taught me that the first points to be observed are that you select none but perfectly-shaped specimens, which must be free from all disease and dirt, and not too far advanced, the question of mere size coming after this. Nor do I doubt that most of my railway brethren who wield the spade possess sufficient knowledge as to the proper treatment the different varieties require at their hands, in order to grow them to perfection. I have constantly seen samples of different kinds of produce from railway men's allotments which have been grown to the highest possible standard. I may here relate an instance which occurred some time ago in my own town. A committee of gentlemen was formed for the purpose of raising a prize fund for the encouragement of allotment gardening. This they did by inviting public subscriptions, an appeal which was very liberally responded to, one of the principal subscribers being the worthy chairman of the N.S. Railway Company. It was afterwards decided to offer a number of prizes for the best cultivated allotments, the whole of the allotments to be judged by competent judges selected by the committee. Shortly afterwards, when the decision of the judges was made known, it was found that out of upwards of one hundred competitors, the first and second prizes had been awarded to railway men—one out of the wagon department and the other a platelayer respectively. Thus I am sure that in no respect whatever, has the railway man

anything to fear from all other competitors, and I am equally sure that if what I have said upon the subject shall prove to be the means of inducing more of my brethren to give the plan I have laid down a fair trial, they will realise for themselves the truthfulness of my statement that to rent allotments for the cultivation of garden produce does pay.

The Funny Railwayman of the Daily Press.

BY A GUARD, *Great Eastern Railway.*

EDITOR of the "Daily Imperial," on receipt of telegram announcing great railway smash: "Where's Sleeper?" Sleeper appears. "Ah, 'er, Sleeper, you've had considerable experience in railway matters, I believe?" "Oh! yes, sir; before I became a reporter I had three days on an important northern line; got on as driver at the time of the big strike, you know." "Ah! then you'll just do for this job. Sleeper. Accident occurred in the North, you must go down and work up the details; be as accurate as possible—the public are getting uncommonly sharp about this sort of thing, Sleeper." "Oh. I'll attend to that, sir. There's a rumour that my old boss has been killed in this collision, hope it's not correct; he was very kind to me at the time of the accident that lost me my job. No fault of mine, though; a confounded goods train got in front of the express I was on; if it had not been for my stoker, who had been a few more years at the job than I had, it would have been a nasty smash." Editor: "Ah. I've heard say before that goods trains are not so fast as expresses; but you had better hurry up, Sleeper."

Sleeper retires to an adjacent pub., produces note-book, and proceeds to do justice to his subject. After a lapse of a couple of hours Sleeper again turns up in Editor's sanctum. Editor (*sotto voce*): "Remarkably smart man at railway matters. Sleeper; should not have thought he had had time to have got there and back; must raise his screw, or the Scribbler over the way will be on his track." (Aloud): "Well, Sleeper, magnificent accident, I hear. I trust you've made the most of it, been careful of the shareholders' interests, no injudicious remarks about the culpability of the authorities; interference in these matters on the part of the public strongly to be condemned, eh, Sleeper?" "Certainly, sir," said Sleeper, accidentally closing one eyelid. "The actual cause of the accident appears to have been the want of a sufficient number of signalmen to pull over a stiff lever, in consequence of the unavoidable absence of half-a-dozen of them building up some bridge that had been washed

away; there was also a dense fog at the time, and through some extraordinary error, instead of the usual number of a couple of dozen fog-signals being placed on the line there were only two placed; these, instead of being fixed in their proper place on the sleepers, were put on the rails." "Ah! while on the subject, Sleeper," said the Editor, "there appears to be a considerable diversity of opinion with regard to the composition of that ingenious and invaluable invention, the fog-signal; now, doubtless, you can set things right?" "Oh, certainly, sir; they are partly filled with dynamite, rammed down with a quantity of gun cotton, the existence of gunpowder being a fallacy with the exception of a little for ignition." "Ah, I'll let the public know a thing or two to-morrow, Sleeper. Good day, Sleeper."

Editor, in response to knock at the door: "Come in." Enter ancient and dilapidated railway wreck. Editor: "Well, my man, and to what profession do you belong?" "I'm a railwayman, sir." Editor: "Really, I took you for a road sweeper." "A shouldn't moind if a wor a road sweeper on our roads for a whoile, sir; there's a mort' o' rubbish wants cleaning away there." Editor (aside): "Ah, this man is evidently prejudiced; I must guard against unreliable information. Well, what is your grievance? State your case clearly and quickly, please." "Well, sir, I've been on our line up'ards o' 45 'ear now, man and boy, and never had my pay redooiced till jest lately. Now, I've heerd tell as how our new bosses gets what they call a bonus for cutting down us chaps' wages; I thought as how—" Editor: "Dear me, my man, you must not come to me with such libellous nonsense. You are altogether in error. Why, are you aware that receiving a bonus for such conduct is really equivalent to taking the bread and butter out of the mouths of the poor men's families? Why, it's positively ghoulish! No, old man, you have been imposed upon. These bonuses, I understand, are given solely on account of the extraordinary ability displayed by these gentlemen in coping with the vast traffic, also for their zeal and devotion to their employers' interest, coupled also with the exercise of a wise economy in respect of labour, use of stores, etc.—these are the reasons for which these bonuses are given, if, indeed, they are not altogether a myth, generated by your discontented state of mind." "I don't rightly understand all they fine words, sir; all I knows is as how my pay's been redooiced, and, dang me, if I don't believe what I've heerd arter all your fine speech." Editor, hastily ringing bell: "Really, I cannot waste time with such a bigoted old man." (To attendant): "Show this person to the door." (To himself): "How very fortunate we have such an experienced, unbiassed man as Sleeper on the staff to refute the discontented nonsense these old railway slaves endeavour to foist on the public."

The moral of this narrative being, If you require really reliable information respecting railwaymen and matters, read a railway paper.

Railway Stories.

By J. G. E. A.

ONE day when the train from Paddington drew up at Chepstow, there stood upon the platform a simple countrywoman with a bundle. Some of the third-class passengers looked very comfortable, and the passenger referred to seemed to be eager to take her seat without loss of time. So she endeavoured to let herself into the compartment which first attracted her eye; but she failed to turn the handle. One of the two occupants—a lady attired in sealskin, who sat in the corner with quite a “first-class” air—was signalled to by the countrywoman to assist her, but the lady, who probably resented in secret the audacity of “this person beneath her,” presented a statuesque attitude without fail. But, in spite of this liberal application of “cold shoulder,” the countrywoman continued to besiege the compartment. Not being able to do anything with the handle, she scratched and tapped at the window glass; but no impression was made. Perhaps she was afraid the train would go without her, and being possessed probably with the “energy of despair,” she inaugurated a series of struggles with the door handle for admission, in which she was at length successful.

She, however, stepped in quite calmly, and took her seat near the Vere-de-Vere-like lady. The latter was scornful: the countrywoman evidently did not allow nasty feelings of pride to trouble her. The train soon started. “I’m so glad,” said the newcomer, in the simplicity of her heart. The lady in the corner, not seeing anything to be glad about, allowed the observation to pass unnoticed. “I’m so glad you’re going this way,” persisted the countrywoman. No reply. “Are *you* going far?” she said to the gentleman in the other corner. “Only to Cardiff,” he replied, “Oh I’m so glad; that’s where I’m going,” she said. She had found a quondam friend, and she “went for him.” “I’ve never gone further than Newport in my life before,” she assured him—the Vere-de-Vere marking the confidential attitude of the informant “out of the corner of her eye”—“and I don’t know what that country down there is like,” she added seriously. “Oh!” replied the gentleman, “I think you will find Cardiff is something like Newport, but larger—they are as civilised there as they are at Newport.” “I’m glad of that,” she said, “because I’ve never been so far.” And in this manner the countrywoman quite unintentionally monopolised the conversation, and inadvertently “sat upon” the lady of fashion, who seemed to feel her position so much.

“Could you tell me where this is?” said the countrywoman in continuation, producing at the same time a piece of paper on which an address was inscribed. “Certainly; the house is about a mile from the station at Cardiff. You can take a car at the bottom of St. Mary Street” “Oh! I hope I shall find it out all right; it’s

my daughter has gone there," etc., etc. And just as the train arrived in Cardiff, the countrywoman, whose simplicity might be considered an element of danger to herself in a big town, finally asked the gentleman in the corner, "Are you going my way, sir?"

An incident of a more serious character occurred on the same line last March. When a train was about to leave Chepstow, two ruffianly-looking men jumped into the compartment in which a young lady and gentleman—strangers to each other—were seated. The young lady informs me that directly they entered the carriage they began to cause an annoyance by lighting their pipes and smoking stale tobacco. Her belief is that they were aware the train would not stop until it reached Newport, and that before they got into that particular compartment they did not see her there, and thought the gentleman was alone. The clouds of smoke puffed were so obnoxious that the gentleman (says my informant) remonstrated with them, saying they ought to think of the lady opposite. They rudely said they didn't see why I should mind, so they rudely asked me, and I, thinking it prudent to agree, said no. When he found they were bent on making themselves troublesome, he gave them some of his tobacco, and asked them to smoke that, and they took it greedily. Soon after, the one who was near me pretended to go asleep, and the other went close to the gentleman, who sat opposite me. My fellow-traveller had several parcels on the seat, which the man began to feel all over. When spoken to, he deliberately made a hole in the paper wrapper of one, as if to see what they were. He then began to beg, and went so close to my fellow-traveller that I quaked with fear. The two men's faces were so much blackened that it was impossible to clearly discern their features. The one apparently sleeping, not hearing the other successful, came to the rescue, and immediately commenced to abuse the gentleman, saying that they had never begged in their lives, and he was insulting them by saying they had done so then. They made me shudder, their language was so offensive, and I thought every minute some scene would be enacted. Fortunately, the gentleman kept his self-control, and assumed to sympathise with them. I could plainly see he was trying his best on my account to keep calm. When they found they could get nothing from him, "not even a few shillings," they produced from underneath the seat a large basket containing lots of strange-looking things. They took one out which was very large, and looked like a huge pair of scissors, but with very long blades and very sharp. These they said they must sell, as they must have money. I thought then, and still do, that they did it to drive him to give them money or to force him into a quarrel. They were, however, adroitly engaged by the gentleman in a conversation, and I believe they thought he meant at last to help them, but he was only trying to eke out the time so as to reach Newport. At length the train ran into Newport, and the men, who had been talking, seemed quite startled, and immediately bundled up all their implements and rushed out of the carriage, going into the darkness. Directly they disappeared, I thanked the gentleman for his goodness in not quarrelling with them. He

said if it had not been for my being in the carriage he would not have put up with their abominable insolence. In reply to my question, "Why did you not communicate with the guard?" my informant stated he did not do so, as he felt so much relieved at the departure of the two men, and was so glad to think that they could go on to Cardiff safely.

Running Wila.

BY A DRIVER, *Great Western Railway.*

HOW many people, besides railwaymen, know the meaning of the above? Very few; and happily very few of the latter know what it is to experience it. In these days of steam brakes, iron blocks, and rail water to keep the blocks cool, it is a very rare occurrence, and only in mountainous districts is it known at all. I was running a train of empties to a colliery situated at the terminus of a single line, which ran up a dingle, as a narrow valley is called. The line terminated at the bottom of the colliery incline, on a gradient of one in twenty-eight. The empties were pulled up to the colliery by a winding engine, and the loaded trucks were let down in the same manner. After putting the empties in the siding, the van being left there ready to drop on behind the loaded wagons as they were being drawn slowly down, it is the rule for the engine to draw the train all the way down the branch to the catch point at the bottom, stop dead there, and have the brakes adjusted preparatory to going right away on the main line. The catch point was to protect the main line, so, in the event of a run away, the train would be turned into a dead end. At the junction was a pair of crossing gates, and when the gates were across the line the catch point would have to be open. I give these few details to show what a poor chance a runaway had of getting out on the main line.

To resume my story. After putting the empties in position, I settled on to the loaded ones, closed them up to allow the sprags to be taken out, and the brakes put down. It was a wild day in November, the wind was blowing as it does blow up the mountains; it was almost impossible to hear oneself speak, and the rails were greasy from a falling sleet. I had my misgivings about the wisdom of taking a heavy train down; but as it always was done, I kept my thoughts to myself. Getting the signal from the guard that all was ready to start, I attempted to move, but owing to the wagons having stood a long time they would not budge. After two or three tries with the same result, the brakesman lifted two or three of the brakes up; I could just start then. My engine had hardly made two revolutions before the train began to push. I shut off steam, and shouted to my mate to give

her some sand, and I applied the steam brake, but owing to the wind the sand was blown away as soon as it left the pipes; the wheels picked up, and away we slid just as if we were on skates. The brakesman jambed down the brake he had picked up, and then jumped on the first wagon, but seeing us going faster and faster he dropped off. My fireman and I looked at each other in silence for a second or two, then he shouted in my ear, "Are you going down with her? I am not!" and I not answering him he added, "Remember, the pick-up is at the bottom, and the catch point will be open," and with that he dropped off. He was an active young fellow, and knew the art of getting off; but the last I saw of him was crashing into the fence.

All this did not take long, and the train was gaining speed at a terrible rate. Alone on an engine, with twenty-nine wagons driving me down to what, I did not know! I held the brake hard on with one hand, and held the brake whistle open with the other, to give them warning at the junction that I was running away. What a lot of thoughts crowded one after another through my mind! I thought of my wife and children, wondering if ever I should see them again; then the thought of father and mother, away up in old England, and my brothers and sisters in various parts of the globe. What would they think of my being killed like that?

I was then going at such a speed that nothing short of a miracle could have saved me had I attempted to get off. I just then shot round the curve that gave me a full view of the junction. The first thing I saw was a brake van; was it on my road? No; I was thankful for that. I saw a gang of plate-layers drop their tools and make tracks to a place of safety. I could see everything that took place without seeming to look. I had only eyes for the junction; when, to my dismay, I saw the engine of the pick-up standing right across the junction. If ever I tried to make a whistle sound louder I did then. My only hope or chance, then, was that the driver would stick to his engine and run ahead to clear the catch points, and the signalman would let me out; and to his credit he did stick to her. I was watching him and holding my breath; I saw him look up, push the lever over, and dash ahead! The signalman shut the catch point, and out on the main line I dashed! Saved! Safe! Who can describe my feelings? Only those who have been saved from almost certain death. My first feelings, after I recovered breath, were of gratitude to both the driver and the signalman for their prompt action. When out on the main line the gradient was much easier, and the rails being cleaner I was able to stop about a mile and a half from the junction.

Of course, there was a searching inquiry; no one was blamed; and I had a letter of commendation and a small gratuity presented to me.



Some Experiences with the Public.

BY A GOODS CLERK, *Great Western Railway.*

SOMEONE has said that the most interesting study of mankind is "man"; and in his dealings with the public, the railwayman, if he is of an observant nature, is in a very favourable position to enlarge his knowledge of men and their ways. He comes in contact with almost every class, and makes the acquaintance of almost every phase of human nature, and his varied experiences with such tend to relieve the "daily round" of his otherwise monotonous duties. During a term of railway service, extending over 18 years, the writer has met with a variety of characters, types of which are doubtless to be met at many stations, and it has occurred to him that a short definition of a few may not, perhaps, be altogether unprofitable.

Amongst that portion of the public which the railway clerk has learned to look upon as "traders," is the man who simulates a superabundance of legal knowledge appertaining to railway companies and the limits and extent of their powers. This individual is, perhaps, the most troublesome the railway official has to deal with. He constantly parades his quasi-legal knowledge, and breathes out threatenings at every turn. Are his cattle delayed in transit, he will "have the law" of the company for cruelty to animals on account of his "beasts" being kept so long without food. He will challenge the legality of the rates charged, and demand to know how some are "made up," and upon what bases the distances upon which they are calculated are arrived at. He seems to be strongly imbued with the idea that railway companies are corporations whose supreme mission in life is to wrong mankind in general and himself in particular. He is in a chronic state of suspicion, and sorely tries the temper and patience of the railway official. The latter he treats with a superciliousness which does not tend to amicable business relations.

Railway clerks particularly, in the nature of their employment, come in contact with the seamy side of human nature, as exemplified by the tricks and subterfuges resorted to by unscrupulous traders to escape their rightful liabilities, and it has often been a matter of surprise to the writer to find how prevalent is the notion amongst the public that there is nothing very wrong in seizing every opportunity of "doing" a railway company.

Some people would seem to be possessed of two moral codes (capable of self-adjustment according to circumstances): one affecting corporate bodies, which is a very lax one, and another affecting individuals, which is the commonly accepted one. You cannot persuade them that the principles of right and wrong are eternally the same, whether in relation to individuals or masses. They will not hesitate to make a wrong declaration of the description of goods forwarded, or, whenever possible, under-declare the weight, in order to secure a reduction in the charges; and it re-

quires all the ingenuity of the railway servant to circumvent this commercial dishonesty. A very prolific method, however, of "bleeding" a railway company, and one which some traders are not slow to take advantage of, is by means of claims. It is astonishing what large amounts are paid annually to traders by the railway companies in settlement of doubtful and shady claims, merely as a matter of policy. One firm of furniture dealers, well known to the writer, almost cover the amount they pay for railway transit by the claims paid to them for alleged breakages, etc. The railway company seems to be quite in their hands in this respect, owing to the astute methods adopted by them. Their practice is to buy sundry lots of second-hand furniture, which are more or less packed up, and sent by rail. On receipt of the goods, heavy claims are sent in for breakages, etc., which it is by no means clear have occurred in transit. These claims are invariably paid, as the companies are unable to prove non-liability. The articles are afterwards patched and polished up, and sold again at no loss to the dealer.

It is refreshing to turn from this class to the conscientious trader--of whom there are not a few. This frieghter, if there are any errors in his ledger, will amend them--in the railway company's favour as well as in his own; indeed, some are over-scrupulous in this respect, even going the length of rectifying overcharges and undercharges to the extent of halfpence. This, of course, rather complicates the trader's balances, but it goes to prove that commercial honesty is still extant.

A great deal has been written about the conduct of railwaymen to the public, in more or less eulogistic or condemnatory terms, but there is an obverse side to this subject, and that is the conduct of the public to railwaymen. There is still room for much improvement in the manner in which railway servants are regarded and treated by the public. Some would appear to regard the railwayman as a mere automaton or "penny in the slot" figure, with no relation to human nature. There are, however, some who do not forget what they owe to railwaymen, and treat them with respect and courtesy. They are ever ready to help them out of any difficulties, and never take advantage of any slips committed by them in their multifarious duties.

Much more might be said on this subject, but the scope of this article forbids "in extenso" treatment. The writer, however, feels that what has been said will be subscribed to by many as bearing out their every-day experiences in their railway career.



Drifting.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *London and North Western Railway.*

WE are often told that "Man is a creature of circumstances," that he is what he is as a result of certain traits which he has inherited, or of his environment. Many a man's life is shaped very largely by his surroundings. If those surroundings are of a pure and healthy nature, if the influences of his early home life are good, if his companions are such as will help him to go straight, the probability is that he will in a large measure be guided by those influences and surroundings; his aspirations will be high, his standard of life will be a noble one, and he will try to live up to it. On the other hand, evidences are numerous and convincing that, if his early surroundings are evil, if his home influences are such as to damp any higher noble aspirations he may have formed, if he is thrown among companions who glory in doing evil and walking in perverse ways, it is highly probable that his standard of life will be exceedingly low, he will have no high ideals to aspire to, no desire for things inspiring and ennobling, or for anything that will help him to look upon life from a standpoint of exalted manhood. But though these early influences tend very largely to shape a man's life it does not follow as a certainty that a man must live his life according to those tendencies. It is not a necessity that it should be so. Life gives us many instances when, by sheer perverseness, men sink below, far below, the influences which surround them, and where, by true nobility of character and by strength of will, others rise completely above them. It is a sorrowful fact that some men who have been blest in early life with influences the most pure, whose home life has been everything that could be desired, whose parents have been patterns of moral rectitude, and have given them every opportunity to live noble lives, have, as soon as they have been removed from those influences, by some strange perversity, gone altogether into different ways, living lives the most wicked and degrading, sinking often, even while in the bloom of life, into abject misery and wretchedness. They have loved to do evil and they have reaped their reward. We have also seen rise from homes which have been very hotbeds of iniquity men of the very highest standard of nobility and true worth, with aims the most lofty, and with an ambition to live up to the very highest conception of what a man's life should be, overcoming difficulties innumerable, and bearing down all opposition and every obstacle which stands between them and the attainment of their desires. But such a thing as the latter cannot be accomplished without an effort. A man may by simply drifting fall from the loftiest pedestal to become a very outcast; but for one to rise from the midst of evil, and from surroundings where

every influence is against him, he must exercise no small amount of determination. His efforts must be concentrated and sustained, and the reason more men do not overcome the adverse circumstances of their life is because they do not sufficiently exert themselves or put forth efforts commensurate with their obstacles. Their good resolves die away at the first sight of difficulty. Like a chip on the stream, they drift with the current hither and thither without an effort worthy of the name. But what a mistake this drifting is, and what numbers of men, even among ourselves, it keeps bound to their present humdrum and monotonous level of existence, when they might, if they would only exert themselves and assert their manhood by courageously breasting the current of their depressing and humiliating circumstances, rise completely out of them, to a position worthy of their intelligence and capabilities. But worse than this, this drifting has a very decided downward tendency—yes, and with a steep gradient too. The fall, though steep, may be almost if not quite imperceptible, the victim oftentimes not realising his descent until, alas! it is too late to return. If our young men will be men in the highest sense of the word, they must avoid this fatal habit of drifting, and if their surroundings and the circumstances of their lives are against them, they must rise superior to them. They may not be able to command riches, but they may command the respect of all who know them. We may all do this, and if a young man makes up his mind to do so he will surely succeed. But drifting with a don't care sort of spirit, or a feeling that it is no use to strive, must be avoided at all costs, or one cannot tell how far or to what extremes he may drift. A sad case occurs to my mind even as I write this. Tom — was a young man who in early life made many good resolutions. He was anxious, I believe sincerely anxious, to become a good if not a great man, and he often said that he would be a much better man than his father, who, truth to tell, was a confirmed old toper. Many a time and oft has he declared that he would rise in the world if hard work and steady conduct would do it. But his home influences were against him. He was not only surrounded by every conceivable temptation, but he was taunted and ridiculed if he held aloof and refused to take part in the carousals of which he was too often the unwilling witness. Unfortunately, he was not strong enough to withstand their attacks, and after a few feeble attempts, he gave up the contest, remarking in a spirit almost of despair, "It is no use, I shall have to take my chance." He did take his chance, he allowed himself to drift anywhere, and in a few years he was as great a toper as his father. He was engaged in the locomotive department, and although he was fortunate enough to retain his employment till he was appointed a driver, it was not long after that he was discharged for being drunk on duty. To make matters worse, poor Tom had married a wife who retarded rather than helped any effort he made to redeem himself. Leaving the railway was the signal for a more rapid fall into degradation, and soon both

he and his wife had sunk so low that nothing was too mean, no trick too low for them to play to get a gill of ale or a "two of gin." Home, self-respect, everything soon disappeared. One day, having exhausted his credit till no publican would trust him further, he consulted his wife upon the best way to raise the wind for a drink. As there were some buildings going on in the vicinity, his wife persuaded him to borrow a wheelbarrow, take off his jacket, smear his face with dirt, and wheel the barrow to the public-house, telling the landlord he had got a job, and ask him to trust him till he received his wages when he would pay him. The publican was taken in, Tom had always paid when he had any money, and thinking he had obtained some work he let him have what he wanted. Tom hurried home, or to the hovel which had the name of home, to tell his wife of the success of the ruse, but found she had gone out, and, on making inquiries, he learned that as soon as he had left, she took his jacket, which she had pawned for sixpence, and was then spending it in gin at another public-house. The poor man had indeed fallen, fallen to a depth of degradation which at one time he had never thought possible. He had his good points, and if he had only stuck to his guns, if he had only had a little more backbone, he might have made a real man of himself; a little more courage, a little more perseverance, a little more concentrated energy, and all might have been well. But he was weak, and he fell. He drifted like a chip on the stream into an awful abyss, and hundreds of young men have fallen in various ways from similar causes.

But it was not thus that David Livingstone rose from the life of a factory boy, to become the eminent missionary and discoverer that he did. It was not in this way that Elihu Burritt rose from his obscurity to become the owner of a name of world-wide renown; nor was it thus that the late Rev. Mr. Gray, who left school at eleven years of age to work in a blacksmith's shop, rose so superior to his surroundings as to become by his own unaided efforts, the master of seven languages, including Hebrew, Greek, and Arabic. It was not by allowing themselves to drift with the stream, by allowing themselves to be carried on by the multitude, that, from surroundings the most obscure they became men of the greatest eminence. They were not rich men but they were great men, and what is far more, they were good men. And these great men do not stand alone. There are hundreds of railwaymen to-day who have conquered the most adverse circumstances, who have overcome difficulties which at one time seemed insurmountable, and although they have not attained to the giddy heights of eminence that the above-mentioned men did, they have, nevertheless, so carved their way, so striven to reach their ideal, so spent their lives for the improvement of their fellow men, that they have earned the respect and esteem of all who know them. Many are taking their part in the municipal government of their town, and are fulfilling their duties with credit. What these are doing, all

may do if they only persevere with a determination that at all costs they will be men. Let then our young railwaymen, with all their life before them, set before themselves a high standard to live up to; let their efforts to live up to that standard be steadfast and continual, and they will be rewarded with success. Let them abhor and shun a life of drifting, and they will become better servants, better citizens, and better men, and the world will be the richer for their having lived.

What is Horse Power?

SMEATON, by direct experiment, found that a horse would, when working regularly, raise 22,000lb. one foot high in a minute. James Watt subsequently carried out experiments at Barclay and Perkins' brewery. He caused some of the immensely powerful horses belonging to the firm to draw up a weight from a deep well, the rope running over a pulley, and he concluded that the maximum effort of such horses represented 33,000 foot-pounds per minute, and this figure he adopted as the standard for his steam engines, and such it remains to this day. Tredgold gave 27,000 foot-pounds per minute for eight hours a day as a horse-power. Rennie took 22,000 foot-pounds as an average. Beardmore had a horse weighing a little over half a ton which did 39,000 foot-pounds for eight hours a day. It can scarcely have failed to strike our readers, however, that there is apparently something misleading about the standards, and that horses are very much more powerful than Watt supposed. Thus, for example, two horses will tow a canal boat at $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour, but an engine indicating at least 10 horse-power is required to do the same work. Trams are drawn by a couple of horses at five or six miles an hour; a steam engine of 20 horse-power is not too much to do the same work, and so we can go on making comparisons, all of which are favourable to the horse, and go far to show that he is incomparably more efficient than any metallic motor it is possible to use. To conclude, as a consequence of all this, that Watt, or Smeaton, or Rennie made a mistake, is, however, not justified by the facts. That the horse is more efficient than the steam engine may be conceded, and yet not affect Watt's accuracy, or throw doubt on the soundness of Tredgold's judgment. The main cause of the disparity lies in the difficulty of applying the power produced by the steam engine to the required purpose. But this is not all; when we speak of 22,000 foot-pounds per minute as the power of a horse, we are apt to forget that this is the net or available power of the animal, not, if we may use the word, his indicated power; it is his brake-power. It is by no means easy to say what the indicated power of a horse is, but we can form some

idea of it under favourable conditions. Let us suppose that we have a powerful dray horse, weighing 2,000lb., not an unusual weight. It is evident that a good deal of energy must be expended in moving such a beast even on a level road. Let him now ascend a hill on an incline of 1 in 30. Let us suppose that the hill is three miles, or 15,840ft. long, and that he occupies an hour in making the ascent. At the end of the hour he will be 528ft. higher than when he started. Consequently he will have done 1,056,000 foot-pounds of work in the time, or 17,600ft. per minute; or, consequently, more than half a horse-power. Such a horse could haul a ton weight of 3,000lb. up the hill at the stated speed. This represents 23,466 foot-pounds, or more than Smeaton's standard. But adding the whole together, we have 41,066 foot-pounds per minute as the work actually done by the horse, and this, as we have implied, takes no account of the energy expended in working the horse's limbs. We shall perhaps not be very far wrong if we say that not more than 50 per cent. of the entire energy of the horse is available for use even at slow speeds. As the speed increases the loss of available energy very rapidly augments, and a galloping horse would probably have little or no power of draught left. From all this we may conclude that it is not quite fair to make the extremely unfavourable comparisons constantly drawn between the steam engine and the horse. In other words, the horse expends much more than a horse-power in doing his work, just as a steam engine expends much more than a horse power to give a horse power on the brake. It is when engines are employed for haulage purposes that they appear in the worst light. Thus, for example, about a 14-horse power gas engine is required to do the work of two horses in propelling a tram-car. It is forgotten that the work done in propelling the weight of the gas engine is included in this, while the weight of the horses is not included at all as work done. But the pair of horses will perhaps weigh as much as the gas engine. The extra strengthening of the car and the weight of the gas cylinders we do not count, because we are dealing for the moment with the engine only as compared to the horses. Furthermore, it will be found that the engine does not exert anything like 14-horse power when the car is running at its regular speed: neither, indeed, does it exert 14-horse power; and the reason of its employment is that a large piston is required to get the requisite torque or turning moment to start the car. An engine running with a maximum pressure dead slow may be giving out very small power; and at low velocities it may provide little useful energy. In this respect it is totally different from the horse, who when starting a heavy load can heave. We cannot find a better word to express the steady pull, seen to advantage when a great railway horse is shunting trucks. We have no doubt a horse can exert a steady pull equal in amount to half his own weight, the whole of which pull is directly available for moving the vehicle to which he is attached. Assuming that 1,200lb. or so is required to start a tram-car, two horses can supply

the requisite pull. But if the horses were in the tram, 1,200lb. would not be enough; and an engine capable of working at 2-horse power when making a couple of hundred revolutions per minute could not exert a dead pull or heave of anything like 1,200lb. For a short effort an engine with a cylinder large enough to develop at the normal speed of the engine 12 or 14-horse power indicated is required, as we have said, and of course this represents so much more weight to be hauled about. It is his wonderful flexibility of effort, as we may call it, that makes the horse useful, and the finding of a substitute for him so difficult. The average torsional effect on the crank shaft of an engine varies but little, no matter whether the engine is moving dead slow or at full speed, unless measures are taken to reduce the effort in the latter case. A reduction in speed bears no necessary relation of any kind to the angular effort of the engine; but with the horse the case is totally different, and at slow speed the effort may become enormously greater than it is at top speed. When working at moderate velocity the horse represents a great latent power of pulling. Nothing at all analogous to it can be found in steam or gas engines.

Sketches of Railway Life: The Station Master.

BY G. H. S.

WITH the public you are expected to converse intelligently on the topics of the day; to listen a hundred times to the same joke or story, and to laugh at it; to bear with their fidgetings, complainings, and, sometimes, insolence, and even insult and abuse; to cut down their claim for loss or of damage to goods to its legitimate proportions, without suggesting it is exorbitant; and in refusing it altogether, not to give reasons that are embarrassing to the claimant. If they travel in a higher class of carriage than that they have taken a ticket for, and pass out of the station without tendering the difference of fare, you should assume they have done it thoughtlessly; if they are found with an umbrella that is not theirs, you should think they have taken it out of the carriage by mistake, and the fact of their own, which is left in its place, being very much poorer, should help you to the conclusion. You are expected by the public to appreciate the motive that dictates the preservation of old labels, especially foreign ones, on Gladstone bags; to deliver free of charge the parcel somebody's obliging friend has brought as far as your station in the train; not to think you are entitled to get your dinner without being called away to attend to them, and not to make the fact of your having been disturbed appear unnecessary; to tell them the train service of the opposition line, and point out its advantages over your own; to like being

addressed as if you were their valet; to oblige them in every conceivable way; and not to treat as a serious consideration that you will receive a drubbing for conceding those of their requests that are unreasonable.

The passenger who cannot be comfortable himself will not permit others to be, and has to be removed. The fraudulent one who declares he has taken a ticket, and threatens proceedings for unlawful detention. The drunken one who brings another as drunk as himself to prove him sober, and who challenges you to walk a chalk line with him "for a pot." The foreign one who gets out of the train by mistake, is left behind, and doesn't know English. The one who has missed his train, or has been sent in a wrong direction, or who has been overcarried and cannot get home that day. The chimney-sweep who takes a first-class ticket, insists on having his luggage in the carriage with him, and who tells the occupants there must be sweeps as well as tailors. The passenger who claims to smoke in a non-smoking compartment, because he cannot get a seat elsewhere. The one who books third-class, but objects to third-class people; or who declines to pay for excess luggage, or for his dog. The card party into whose society you are compelled to thrust other travellers. The gentleman who will not go round by the subway, but quotes something about your being clad in a little brief authority, informs the audience that your salary is a pound a week, and ventures to forfeit a crown if you can raise as much money as will make change to that amount; then professes his forgiveness for what you have done, tells you not to be a fool, to "come and have a drink." The farmer's servant who is leaving his situation, and will play his accordion on the station. The travelling company of theatricals who cannot raise means to pay their fares, and wish to put in pledge a number of effects that are valueless except to themselves. The cricket team which practise whilst waiting for the train, and break a window. The man who has fallen and hurt himself on the platform, or who has bruised his shins against a barrow that has been left in the way. The one who attempts to join or leave the train in motion. The lass that loves a sailor, or a soldier, and gets upon the footboard to kiss him when the train has started. The child upon whose fingers a carriage door has been closed, or the one that has arrived in charge of the guard, and has not been met by its mother. The luggage that is lost, containing the apparel for a ball, the brief for a case at court, or mayhap the judge's wig. The horse that has got down in its box, or that has come to hand too late for a sale or a race. The dog that has bitten somebody whilst it was in your charge, or that has escaped from you, or that has torn a brace of birds that you have omitted to put out of its reach. The prize sheep for the show that has eaten the prize turnips similarly consigned. The ice, fish, fresh meat, and sausages which have been thrown upon your hands. The inspector of weights and measures who condemns your scales; and ditto of the Parish Council, who has discovered a shred of litter on your cattle dock, or in a wagon.

In beginning a day's work you are under the disadvantage of not knowing what it will be. Certain routine there always is to follow; but how and where you will deal with the traffic depends altogether upon how much of it there will be, and when it will arrive. You cannot make arrangements in advance in such conditions, beyond clearing as much space in which to work as possible. If you were to do so, you would only prove that the saying, "the best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang oft agley" is probably more frequently realised on railways than anywhere. An additional train, one running out of course, or late, or even an unexpected vehicle to attach or detach, will disarrange the most carefully devised plan; whilst a mishap will turn everything topsy-turvy. In such circumstances, instructions issued beforehand are most likely to be all wrong, and will have exactly the opposite effect of that desired. You must therefore be rich in resource and quick to seize opportunities. You are tied almost hand and foot with block telegraph, and other prohibitive regulations, and with the interlocking of points and signals. Each manœuvre must consequently be arranged so as not to be hindered by those things. You must sketch in your mind all alternatives that might save a minute, and at the same time grasp all the ramifications of your decision as well as its immediate advantages; yet, who ever heard of traffic standing whilst the matter was debated? Then the misapprehension of an order may often defeat your purpose and bring up an entirely new set of conditions to be dealt with. Therefore, resource is your master-card; and second to it is experience, which teaches what to avoid and effects smartness of execution. Your great adversary is the unexpected.

If you would maintain your position without incurring either the pity or contempt of your staff, you must be a sufficient authority on every question that comes up; you must never appear small or ridiculous, nor do a mean or selfish thing. You must express yourself in brief and clear terms: your touch must be soft, your grip strong; and you must read each man's character and disposition separately. No greater error can be committed than to try to discipline men of various temperaments, characters, and dispositions by a common code. You must sympathise with them in their trials, and rejoice with them in their joys; you must obtain for them all the privileges to which they are entitled, and be ready to redress wrongs as far as lies in your power; but you must never tell an untruth for their sake, nor take a flogging that they ought to bear. You must be lenient towards the faults of human nature, but strict in your sense of duty; an unmistakable friend and an equally unmistakable master. If you observe these things, you will not only be readily obeyed, you will be honoured also.

The appearance, manners, and speech of a gentleman, the ability of a general, the tact of a courtier and diplomatist, the temper of a lamb, a will that is firm, a disposition that is indulgent, the training of an accountant, half that of a lawyer, the education of an exciseman; good height, good weight, and a few lessons in boxing.

The "Masher Guard."

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Caledonian Railway,*

TOM WILLIAMS—a young man between 25 and 30—was guard of one of the express trains which ran between the large railway centre of Faircity and the neighbouring town of Juteopolis. Tom was one of the smartest and finest looking men in the service, and, like most good-looking men—or women either—was quite conscious of all the good looks he possessed. He prided himself in turning out every morning in the best of form; buttons and boots shining, clothes well brushed, faultless collar and tie, and a flower in his coat. His neighbours in Faircity called him the "masher guard." As a "lady killer" Tom considered himself irresistible. He used to "mash"—in a mild way, of course—the young lady passengers who happened to be travelling with his train, by being most attentive in opening carriage doors when they were entering or leaving his train; at other times, when his train had to wait a few minutes at a station on a branch connection, he would stalk grandly along the side of his train, backwards and forwards, squaring his shoulders and tugging one of the ends of his heavy moustache, all the while stealing sly side glances (keekin' oot at the side o' his e'e, "Sandy Macpherson" would say) at the carriage windows to see if any fair one was admiring him. He wouldn't be the least surprised, he used to think, if some rich young heiress fell desperately in love with him, seeing he was so awfully good looking, although only a railway guard. He had read of such cases happening before. Why not happen with him too? At last Tom Williams thought he was in luck, and that he had actually conquered a wealthy young lady by the power of his good looks. A young lady, Miss Bethune by name, only daughter of a wealthy banker in Faircity, was in the habit of travelling occasionally to Juteopolis with the train of which Tom Williams acted as guard. She was a beautiful girl of two-and-twenty or thereabouts. Williams knew she was old Bethune the banker's daughter, and he thought if he got his choice of an heiress to fall in love with him he would certainly choose Miss Bethune. What was his surprise and pleasure, then, as he was on his return journey to Faircity with his train one evening, to observe Miss Bethune—who was a passenger in it—looking fixedly at him several times when the train happened to stop at a station. His surprise was still greater when the train arrived at Faircity. Miss Bethune came forward to him and put a letter into his hand, and after bestowing upon him a winning smile, hurried out of the station. He was busy attending to his duties when she handed him the letter, so he put it carefully into his pocket until he could get an opportunity to read it.

Such opportunity he soon found. The contents of the letter were as follows:—

“Park Avenue, Nov. 10th, 1895.

“Mr. Williams.

“Sir,—I have taken the liberty of writing you this note, asking if you will kindly arrange to meet me to-morrow evening at eight o'clock, at the corner of Park Avenue next the river, as I wish most particularly to speak with you. Hoping you will not fail to meet me at the place and hour appointed, you will greatly oblige,

“Yours sincerely,

“ETHEL BETHUNE.

“P.S.—The above is strictly confidential.—E. B.”

“Yes,” said guard Williams to himself, “I’ll be at the corner of Park Avenue next the river to-morrow evening to the minute. There is not the least doubt now as to whether or not Miss Bethune is in love with me. This letter of hers amounts to a confession.”

Then he imagined himself eloping with the wealthy banker's daughter, the newspapers commenting upon the affair giving details about the beautiful heiress and the handsome guard; how the wealthy old banker forgave his daughter, after he learned she had been married to the man of her choice, and took Williams into partnership with him in the bank. He also thought how he would take the “shine” out of the other guards, especially Jim Tippler, who was always cracking jokes with the porters and others at his expense.

So next evening, after dressing himself with particular care, he took his way to the corner of Park Avenue in good time to meet Miss Bethune, thinking, as he went, as to what he would say or how he ought to proceed should she actually confess love and admiration for him. Would he drop on one knee in front of her, the way he had seen gallant lovers do on the stage at the theatre, and tell her he never hoped or even dreamed of being loved by an angel like her, etc.? He was not sure what was the proper thing to do in such a case. But here he was at the corner of Park Avenue, excited and trembling all over, before he had definitely resolved on doing anything. Miss Bethune soon made her appearance. Park Avenue was in close proximity to her father's house. As soon as she was assured in the darkness that the man on the sidewalk was Williams, she addressed him as follows:—

“I’m sorry, Mr. Williams, if I’ve kept you waiting.”

“Not at all, Miss Bethune,” he said; “I’d gladly wait here all night to serve you.”

Then much to her surprise and no small alarm, he dropped down on one knee upon the sidewalk in front of her, and, taking off his hat, began the following oration:—

“Sweet angel, I never hoped or even dreamed of finding such favour in your eyes, or yet of gaining your heart's affection and——”

"Rise up, Mr. Williams, and put on your hat, and kindly hear what I have to say to you," said Miss Bethune, with an ill-suppressed laugh.

Tom Williams got to his feet at once, thinking he had just been a little "too previous," and feeling rather small in consequence. Then he asked her to pardon him for presuming to address her in the manner he had done, but that somehow after he got her letter he stupidly imagined she was in love with him.

Miss Bethune laughingly forgave him for his foolish blunder, then she continued:—

"I want you, Mr. Williams, to do me a particular service by acting as letter carrier between myself and a friend of mine, a gentleman in Juteopolis. Mr. Liddle is his name. I know I can take you into my confidence in this matter, as I have made strict inquiries regarding you of those who know you personally. To let you fully understand, Mr. Williams, so that you may be able to serve me the better, Mr. Liddle and I are engaged. My father, however, has determined to break off our engagement by intercepting Mr. Liddle's letters to me, and by absolutely forbidding me to write or speak to him, simply because Mr. Liddle is not so wealthy as papa would like him to be. Will you oblige us, Mr. Williams? You will be well rewarded for your trouble if you do."

"Most certainly," replied Williams; "but I won't take any reward, Miss Bethune."

"We shall see about that by-and-by," she continued. "In the meantime allow me to thank you, Mr. Williams."

She then gave him full instructions as to how he was to carry letters between herself and Mr. Liddle without "exciting papa's suspicions," etc. Williams promised to carry out her instructions faithfully, and also to maintain the strictest secrecy regarding them. Williams then took his way home feeling very much "taken down." But there was one consolation—Jim Tippler or anyone else would never know about his going down on his knees, and making a theatrical love-speech and a fool of himself to Miss Bethune.

I need only add that in the long run the old banker gave his consent to the marriage of his daughter with Mr. Liddle, and that Mr. and Mrs. Liddle rewarded Williams by buying him a partnership in a good business. He is now a flourishing merchant in Faircity, with a good share of his old pride and swagger still asserting itself.



Curious Deposits in Railway Cloak-Rooms.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Great Western Railway.*

NO one outside railway circles can have any adequate idea of what strange articles are sometimes deposited in railway cloak-rooms.

Notwithstanding the enormous number of articles of almost every imaginable description which pass through the hands of the cloak-room officials at large stations daily, it is a significant fact that very seldom indeed does an article go astray, *i.e.*, get delivered to the wrong person. This is all the more surprising considering the numerous clever tricks which are frequently being practised by the artful rogues who are constantly prowling about railway stations, watching their opportunity to purloin other people's property; while, on the other hand, for reasons unaccountable, it sometimes occurs that property deposited in railway cloak-rooms is never claimed. In such cases, after the deposits have remained unclaimed for a period of three months, they are overhauled, a list of the property is compiled, which is then forwarded to the Lost Property Office, London, where, after the expiration of six months, it is sold by public auction.

The examination of unclaimed deposits has frequently brought to light some very strange things.

This recalls to mind a remarkable incident which occurred at a railway station some few years ago. On this occasion the examination of a large box which had lain unclaimed in the cloak-room for several months, and which, according to the depositor's representations, contained bottled wine, resulted in the discovery of a quantity of valuable silver plate. In misrepresenting the contents of the box it was obvious that the depositor had a good reason, and this naturally aroused our suspicions that the plate was stolen property. The matter was immediately placed in the hands of the police authorities, whose investigations subsequently confirmed our suspicions. It transpired that the plate, which consisted of a portion of a valuable dinner service and numerous other rare articles, in all valued at £1,000, was the proceeds of a daring robbery, which had been cleverly effected a few months previously at a well-known mansion on the outskirts of Bristol, while the occupants of the house were at dinner. At the end of a fortnight, the local police having failed to obtain a clue to the perpetrators of the robbery, a detective from Scotland Yard was sent down to investigate the matter. The same ground as the local police had already traversed had to be gone over afresh; but beyond giving the detective a rough description (as far as memory served us) of the person who deposited the box, we, the cloak-room officials, could render him very little assistance. We were shown a number of portraits of criminals whose great love for other people's property had caused the detective to seek their acquaintance, but we failed to recognise any one of them as in

any degree resembling the man wanted. "Well," said the detective, diving his hands deep into his trousers pockets, "the only thing we can do now is to wait patiently the development of affairs. I feel confident," he continued, "that the rogues will not allow such valuable booty to slip through their fingers without making a strenuous effort to secure it. It is quite probable that the box was deposited in the cloak-room until the coast was considered clear for its safe transit elsewhere; and for all I know, the rogues may be engaged at the present time in one of Her Majesty's prisons, working out the cost of another crime." We listened attentively to the detective's little oration, and all agreed that his suggested solution of the mystery appeared a very feasible one.

A fortnight passed by, and still the box remained unclaimed. But success invariably rewards those who wait. And when I came on duty one morning, a few days afterwards, my mates were all eager to inform me that a man had just been to claim the box, and that the detective had arrested him, and conveyed him to the police-station, leaving instructions that I must proceed there at once, for the purpose of ascertaining whether I was able to identify the prisoner as the person who deposited the box. I proceeded at once to the police-station. But I had not gone far before I met the detective hurrying back to the railway station. I immediately observed that he was looking exceedingly pale and agitated about something, and I ventured to ask if the prisoner had escaped. "No," replied the detective. "Worse; he has shot himself. As you are doubtless aware, I arrested the man this morning when he came to claim the box. I conveyed him direct to the police-station, placed him in a cell, and having left a police constable in charge, I proceeded to the telegraph office, some short distance away, for the purpose of wiring to my chief that I had effected the capture. By an oversight, which I am utterly unable to account for, I neglected to take the precaution to search his clothes, and when I returned, after an absence of only half an hour, I found the prisoner lying in the cell in a pool of blood apparently dead. Beside him lay a revolver, with which he had apparently committed the act, while the floor was literally strewn with pieces of letters and other documents, which he had torn up into countless fragments, doubtless for the purpose of concealing his identity." "No," replied the detective, in answer to a question, "the man is not dead; but he is in a critical state, and small hopes are entertained of his recovery." It was obvious, by the way the detective spoke, that he felt keenly that his want of thought in not searching the prisoner had contributed to the unfortunate incident. Consequently, I could very well imagine his great anxiety to return immediately to London to lay the facts before his superiors.

Three weeks had passed by since the incident referred to occurred, during which time the prisoner had made such rapid progress towards recovery that it was considered he was quite well enough to be brought before the magistrate.

The case had aroused a considerable amount of public interest, and the day on which it came on for hearing the little court was

crowded to its utmost capacity with people eager to learn the nature of the revelations which the newspapers had repeatedly predicted would be forthcoming.

Just as the proceedings were about to commence, a telegram was handed to the magistrates' clerk. That functionary having perused the contents, a consultation with the magistrates followed, ending in a brief adjournment. Everybody in court was naturally astonished at the extraordinary turn affairs had taken, and was wondering what would happen next. However, this suspense was soon relieved by the magistrates returning into court. Order having been restored, the clerk said: "We have just received information which sheds a curious light on this somewhat remarkable case. From proof obtained from the letters which were found torn up in the prisoner's cell, and which have since been carefully matched together, there remains not a shadow of doubt that the prisoner at the bar is the son and heir of Lord ———, whose residence he stands accused of having robbed. What has brought him to this deplorable state I will not enter into; suffice it to say that gambling and dissipation compelled his father to discard him some years ago, since which time his father has been utterly ignorant of his whereabouts. By a fortunate circumstance two notorious burglars were arrested in London a few days ago, while in the act of committing a robbery, resulting in one of them turning Queen's evidence. This led to a confession of having perpetrated the robbery for which the prisoner at the bar is accused."

It appears that the two men referred to above met the prisoner at a common lodging-house, and under a promise of a portion of the booty induced him to fetch the box from the railway station, with the result already known. The public are still ignorant what became of the prisoner; but rumour says he was sent abroad. The two other rogues subsequently received five years' penal servitude as a reward for their industry.



Electricity and Railway Workshops.

By M.

ALTHOUGH electrical engineering has made rapid strides in the last decade, it is not probable that we shall see for many years to come electromotors supplant steam locomotives. The transformation of mechanical energy into electrical is always a more or less wasteful process, because in the majority of cases this conversion has to be effected by means of a steam-engine, and the best steam-engines convert only one-tenth of the potential energy in abeyance in the fuel into mechanical. Add to this that there are losses in the transformation of the latter into electrical, by means of dynamos, as well as those which must unavoidably take place between the dynamos and electromotors; you will then understand that the use of electrical motors as a means of traction on main line railways is uneconomical. There are certainly circumstances under which the electric locomotive has been and is employed successfully. We might add that in some situations its employment is the only rational and effectual way of dealing with the haulage of materials. But these are particular cases which do not arise on main railway lines.

It is not probable that any serious railway engineer will ever entertain the idea of adopting electric locomotives on main line railways. We know, however, that this senseless project is entertained by some men who are ignorant of either practical railway working or of the practical part of electrical engineering.

But if we must for the present dismiss the idea of electrical traction on our railways, we must not forget at the same time that electricity is a precious auxiliary in the working of the traffic, and that we have not as yet utilised all the services it is now susceptible of rendering.

The transmission of power at moderate distances is a necessity of our modern engineering workshops. This has been effected in various manners, chiefly by rope gearing and hydraulic pressure. But however convenient these systems may be, it cannot be gainsaid that electrical transmission of power is far superior to them, for it adapts itself so easily to many requirements difficult to realise with either hydraulic or air pressure. The transmission of power by electricity has so many advantages that we are surprised that its introduction has not made more progress in our engineering workshops. There are in our railway workshops many operations connected with the construction or repair of rolling stock, in which heavy masses have to be displaced in order to be brought under the special machine tools required for the work. In other cases work has to be effected by hand which would be better and more quickly executed if power could be transmitted cheaply and easily to apparatus and machines, which could be erected on or near the work wherever required.

The electromotor solves this problem in a remarkable manner. Its place in the boiler shop, for instance, is already marked. Drilling of holes, tapping of stay holes, and sundry other operations connected with the construction and repair of boilers can be rapidly and accurately effected by means of electro-magnetic drills. To fix such apparatus to the part to be operated upon the attractive power of electro-magnets can be resorted to. The electric drill is an ordinary portable drilling machine, actuated by an electromotor; two flexible wires connect the latter with electric mains distributing the current generated by dynamos, which can also serve for the production of electric light.

It would occupy too much space to enumerate here the list of applications of portable machine tools driven by an electric current, but these may be easily imagined. Wherever portable tools are wanted, or work must be done *in situ* by hand, the electromotor will meet the requirements. The reborring of cylinders, the facing of valve faces, of horn blocks, tapping of holes in tyres and wheels, are instances of this. The electromotor has a great flexibility, and operates quickly, cleanly, and neatly. The power expended might not in all cases be as cheap as that of other mechanical appliances intended for the same purpose, but if we take also into consideration the time, the labour, and consequently the saving in wages, we can say that electro-magnetic machine tools are economical. On the other hand, their work being intermittent, and transmission gearing being absent, the expenditure of energy to drive the dynamo is limited, especially if the latter is carefully constructed so as to respond automatically to the variation of loads.

Another no less precious property of the electric current is its heating power. The industrial applications of this property have formed the subject of many patents. The heat produced by an electric current is very intense, and susceptible of easy control. As the current of the required intensity can now be easily produced and regulated by means of converters or transformers, the welding or forging of intricate parts of machinery becomes an easy matter. The application of electrical heat has the advantage of being localised, and of giving sound welds. In parts which are built up, the welds are always a source of danger, as one can never be certain whether the contiguous faces of a joint are in intimate contact. With electric welding no such danger exists, as the danger of burning the metal can be altogether avoided. Electric welding is a precious resource in smiths' or boiler work. For welding draw bars to their draw hooks it is far superior to the usual process. In boiler work it would give superior results in welding locally, and producing seamless tubes, barrel rings, etc.

It cannot be said that electrical welding or forging is cheaper than the ordinary process hitherto in use, but the soundness in the work so obtained, and the rapidity with which it is executed, will certainly more than compensate the extra expense incurred by the adoption of electric welding or forging apparatus. Tempering could also be performed by an electric current. We thus

see what a vast field is open to modern electrical engineering in connection with construction or repairing of railway machinery. There is no doubt that before long the invaluable properties of the electric current will have been fully recognised and taken advantage of in the construction of portable tools and welding or forging apparatus.

The Hindoo on the Railway.

BY A DRIVER, *London and North Western Railway.*

THE Hindoo has nearly given up all his old modes of going about from one place to another. Walking under a roasting sun, mile after mile, is a thing not to be talked of; floating along in heavy boats which are at the mercy of the tides is a desperately tedious affair, and swinging in palanquins borne on the shoulders of six or eight bearers or riding in springless carts over rough roads, with several relays of bullocks or horses, is not only uncomfortable and cumbrous, but very expensive, compared with the smooth and fast-going railway train. So our Indian traveller prefers the iron horse to all other modes of conveyance, and is extremely thankful to the man who invented the 'fire-chariots.' He is a man never given to hurry by nature; he moves slowly, talks deliberately, and never looks at the clock when taking his meals. But the railway has produced a great change in him of late. He is no longer the apathetic creature he used to be. When a Hindoo is bent on travelling nowadays, there is no more dawdling or unnecessary delaying before the moment of starting on his journey. He has got no time to kiss the amulet once more, and he cannot sit down for a moment or two again if anybody happens to sneeze just before he steps out of his house. He must put off doing these little but very important things till another time when he has more leisure. Now he is in dread of missing the practical train, which he knows will not stop or wait at his bidding; and if he be not in time to catch it, it will whirl along like a rushing stream, leaving him and his enormous luggage struggling on the deserted platform. And this fear will often make him start from his home, if it be some distance from the station, hours before the particular train by which he intends to go is ready by the side of the platform, whereon he will sometimes wait the whole night for the early train which leaves on the morrow. You will often see country stations in India strewn over at night with the stretched forms of travellers sleeping under their blankets, their bags serving for pillows. They do not mind the hard, bare ground as regards their body, but they must have something softer than that under their head; for they are afraid that if a man sleeps without such a support for his head, his soul will

have no rest in the next world. And there the railwayfarer sleeps and dreams on the contented security of getting into the morning train without fail. And get into it he does; for he springs on his feet as if electrified directly the first bell rings, and gathers his boxes and bundles about him, so as to be ready for the coming train.

A scene of indescribable confusion takes place on the platform as soon as the train draws up by it. The rushing to and fro, the elbowing one another, the shouting and gesticulating for the missing bundle or the straying baby, and the never-ending leave-taking with a host of friends and relations—these must be witnessed on the spot in order to be realised. A sort of supernatural energy seems to possess the quiet and impassive creatures for the moment, who all want to jump at the same time into the cars, bearing with them nearly all their portable goods and chattels. It is very seldom that an orthodox Hindoo travels all by himself. He must have his servant and cook with him; for he will not touch any food cooked by a man of inferior caste, and consequently he will carry a whole set of cooking apparatus with him in all his journeyings. To this must be added his bedding and its appurtenances; for he will not put up at an hotel, or sleep on other people's mattresses. So with pots and pans, quilts and pillows, mosquito curtains and portable fans, and a hundred other little things, the use of which is known to an Indian traveller alone, his luggage generally becomes abnormally huge, all of which he will persist in taking with him to his seat in the carriage, against all rules and requests. It is the third-class that is most affected by the natives of India. But respectable Hindoos do not like to travel in the same carriage with their servants, and with all sorts of people, neither do they like to pay for the second-class. So to meet the requirements of this class of passengers a number of carriages are attached to a good many Indian trains under the name of intermediate class, the fare for which lies between those of the second and third classes. And, as will be seen, travelling for a respectable Hindoo, who has not adopted any outlandish ways, is not a simple or inexpensive affair, attended as he is by his servant and carrying a load of luggage. This is more so when he has his family with him. In that case he generally has a whole compartment reserved for the sole use of his party, for which purpose he wrote or telegraphed to the stationmaster three days in advance. And what with the big trunks and boxes, a number of attendants, and the constant anxiety to screen his wife and daughters from the public gaze, the Hindoo does not have a moment's rest when journeying by rail *en famille*. Though there are some compartments kept apart for ladies only, in almost all the Indian trains, he does not like to put his womankind in them with half-caste or European ladies, but must have them with himself, under his own eye, and therefore never grumbles to pay the extra for the privilege of occupying a whole compartment. Accustomed as he is to be very careful in guarding the privacy of his family he is not as a rule a jealous man or a tyrannical governor. A fond father and

an affectionate husband, the Hindoo is ever attentive to the comforts and requirements of his family while travelling, constantly buying fruits and other eatables, or bargaining hard with the hawkers for some toys from the carriage windows at nearly every station the train stops at. In India nearly all the railway stations are frequented by a large number of hawkers and vendors of all sorts of articles, the most conspicuous among them being those retailing sweetmeats and fruits.

It is a great bother to the Hindoo traveller when he has to change trains, or to get out for any reason, for in the country stations he can seldom find palanquins or sedan-chairs to transfer his ladies from one carriage to another, who have, therefore, to go on foot with him without exposing themselves very much to the view of the other passengers. Even in the train itself he has no respite from his trouble. Inasmuch as the two adjoining compartments of a railway car are divided by an iron railing, and not partitioned by lattice-work or thick curtains, as in his own house, he must pull out blankets or wrappers from one of the bundles, and hang them up across the railing, thereby making a temporary screen, which also serves to warn people in the next compartment that they have respectable ladies for their neighbours. Then there are the difficulties about the commissariat department. A strict Hindoo will never eat anything in the train, even if he has to travel for days and nights together. He knows that there are all sorts of people in it, including the beef-eating engineer, whose touch is pollution to him. He will therefore get down from the train whenever it stops for a long time, perform the necessary ablutions, and then take some sweetmeats or fruits bought from a clean-looking Brahmin hawker about the station. Should he not finish his meal before the train is in motion again he will throw away the food in the act of taking it, and jump into his carriage. But this sort of religiousness is disappearing in many parts of India, and young men of the present day are not always over-scrupulous about taking refreshments while travelling by rail. Most Hindoo railway travellers proceed either on business or on pilgrimage, very few travelling for the sake of travelling. If a man living in the plains goes up to the Himalayas, it is not that he wants to contemplate the marvels of Nature in those lofty regions: his aim and end is to worship in the sacred shrine of Haridwar, from near which issues the beneficent River Ganges, the Jordan of the Hindoos. A few railway lines depend for their existence entirely on these pilgrim passengers. An average Hindoo is a religious-minded man, and very charitable too. This latter quality in him brings forth any amount of ragged children from the villages by which the line passes: some two or three dozen of them will run alongside of the train crying for coppers, which, when flung to them from the carriage windows, produce a lively scene of fighting and scrimmage.

Air Resistance.

By A. B.

THIS fair earth of ours is surrounded by an air ocean of a depth variously stated at from 50 to 100 miles, at the bottom of which we all live and move, and have our being, and which presses upon everything animate and inanimate with a pressure of nearly 15lb. per square inch. It is 770 times lighter than water, for, while a cubic foot of water weighs $62\frac{1}{2}$ lb., a cubic foot of air weighs only $1\frac{1}{4}$ ounces. It has buoyancy enough, however, to float light bodies of large displacement, and has, like the briary ocean, its currents and waves, and imposes a resistance to moving bodies proportional to its destiny.

The air has a resistive power, and though it cannot be seen, its effects can be felt as it flies along at hurricane speed, spreading devastation in its progress. Mighty ocean-going steamers are tossed about like corks by its overwhelming power; and those of us who are drivers of trains know but too well the tremendous efforts of a gale of wind in retarding speed, and rendering futile our efforts to run to time.

The resistance of air to moving bodies is both real and substantial; and the only question must, I fancy, be as to its amount at certain speeds. A speed of 20 miles per hour will have a certain resistance, and a speed of 40 miles a different amount; while a speed of 60 miles per hour, added to a head wind of 40 miles per hour, or a favourable wind of the same amount, will give us very different resistances and results. The power required to move a train on a straight, level road amounts to from 9lb. to 10lb. per ton, and from that as a foundation of fact, I have, by a process of reasoning, experimentation, and calculation, arrived at certain conclusions, which I wish to place before your readers.

My experiments extend over a considerable period, and the results must be taken as approximations only, as the calculations have to be made on the principle of averages, and though sufficiently accurate for all practical purposes, cannot be guaranteed to the 1-16th part of an ounce. And it must also be remembered that they apply to trains of passenger stock only. For, though the ton has been adopted as the unit of the moving body, and the pound as the unit of resistance measurement, still common-sense teaches that superficial area, as in the sails of a ship, must be the determining factor in calculations to be universally applied.

My experience as a driver is, that a head wind of 20 miles per hour is equivalent to an addition of from 25 to 30 tons on a train of 120 tons, for train and engine, and that a wind of a like amount blowing in the direction the train is running is equivalent to a reduction of the same amount, due to the decreased air-resistance with the favourable wind. But what, may be asked, is the air-resistance at 20 miles an hour? Three pounds to 4lb. per ton. How do you know? some may say; and this I must say is a very legitimate question, which it is my sole purpose in this article to answer.

On a certain portion of the line over which I run, there is a rising gradient of 1 in 100 for over a mile right into the station, and I shut off steam half a mile from the station where I had to stop, while going at a speed of 40 miles per hour, and found the train had just sufficient momentum to carry it to the platform with a very slight application of the brake. Weight of engine and train, 120 tons; time occupied in running the half-mile, $1\frac{1}{2}$ minutes; average speed, therefore, 20 miles per hour for the distance. Now, the train, running over a gradient of that length and steepness, was raised a perpendicular distance of 26ft., and as a foot-pound of work is 11lb. raised 1ft. high, the work done in stopping the train due to gravity would be the weight of the train itself in pounds by 26, the distance raised, or 268,800lb. by 26 equals 6,984,000ft. pounds. But as the average speed during the retardation was equal to 20 miles per hour, the average momentum of the train must have been 8,050,000ft. pounds; and subtracting the work done by gravity and friction from this, leaves 1,066,000ft. pounds as the average work of retardation due to the resistance of the air, or equal to 3.36lb. per ton.

Again, in running my train between two stations on a level road, a distance of 9 miles and 20 chains, on two recent occasions, I particularly observed, that with a head wind blowing at 20 miles an hour in excess of what it was on the first occasion referred to, the train was retarded in speed by exactly 1min. 20sec. on the run, by the increased resistance due to the high head wind. The power of the engine was the same in both cases, the same pressure, the same point of cut-off in the cylinder, and the same opening for steam by the throttle valve; but the average speed of the train was reduced from 44.5 to 40.5 miles per hour, or, to put it in another way more easy to understand, the increased resistance of the air was equivalent to the addition of a mile to the run, and the work done measured by that of the first day was equal to the amount done over 10 miles and 20 chains, instead of 9 miles 20 chains. Now the work done on a level road with a train of 120 tons, at a speed of 44.5 miles, equals 10,560,000 ft. pounds, and this divided by $9\frac{1}{4}$ miles, the distance run, gives 1,170,000ft. pounds, or $3\frac{1}{2}$ lb. per ton due to the increase in the resistance of air from the half-gale blowing.

From 3lb. to 4lb. per ton, therefore, I conclude is the resistance of the air at a speed of 20 miles per hour, and a double speed means a double resistance, or in other words, the resistance increases with the speed. As an instance, I give another example of my observation. With a head wind of from 30 to 35 miles per hour, on a falling gradient of 1 in 100, I noticed that the force of gravity on the train was just sufficient to maintain the speed at about 30 miles an hour, against the forces of friction and air-resistance that were doing their utmost to bring it to a state of rest. The total work of gravity per mile equalled 13,440,000 ft. pounds, and the total amount of power necessary to overcome friction at 10lb. per ton equals 6,336,000 ft. pounds per mile, and taking the latter from the former sum, gives 7,108,000 as due to the resistance of the air, or about equal to $11\frac{1}{4}$ lb. at a speed of wind and train of 65 miles per hour.

The Earliest Railways.

By G. S.

THE earliest railways were made as tributaries to the various canals, which toward the end of the last century were constructed all over the country in every direction. The canal as a means of intercommunication was considered so perfect that the original railways were only constructed where it was impracticable to make a canal, or where the expected traffic did not warrant the expense of a water-way.

These railways were considered of such little importance that in 1805, a writer on canals, when mentioning these branch railways, says: "A very proper precaution seems to have been adopted in the Somerset Coal Canal Act, that the parties to be benefited by such branch railways should first give the company security to make up the tolls thereof by an annual payment, in case of their falling short of a reasonable interest on the money expended upon such branches." And, again, the same writer, in speaking of the construction of these railways, says: "In some instances it may be necessary, particularly on railways, to permit individuals to construct and manage such part of the works as pass through their own park or grounds, but subject to the general system of management laid down in the Act."

At first, the horses each drew but one wagon on the railways; but the concentrated weight of these vehicles broke the cast-iron rails then in use, and, in 1768, Richard Edgeworth introduced the practice of having three small wagons coupled together, instead of the one large one, and so distributed the load on twelve wheels, instead of four; and twenty years later he introduced a further improvement, viz., roller-bearings to the wagon axles, which considerably diminished the friction.

Towards the end of the last century, so numerous did the proposals for railways become, that on the 22nd June, 1799, the House of Commons made a Standing Order for extending to all Bills for making any ways or roads, commonly called rail or dram roads, all the Orders (of May 7th, 1794) relating to the introduction of Canal Bills.

The gauge of most of these early lines was about 4 feet. With regard to the expense of working a railway, Dr. Anderson has calculated the expense of carrying goods in common wagons on turnpike roads, a distance of eight miles, at 3s. 4d. per ton; and of carriage the same distance on a railway, at 4d. per ton, or only a tenth part of the former.

A curious method in the working of the declines on these early railways was that of placing an iron skid under the wheels of the wagon, but of course on the rails, so causing the wagons to slide down at a reduced speed. This skid was chained to a

wagon, as is the case with those employed on road vehicles at the present time.

Most writers state that the Surrey Iron Railway, authorised in 1801, was the first constructed under an Act of Parliament; but this is an error, as the first railway authorised by Act of Parliament was the Cardiff and Merthyr Tydfil Railway, constructed under Act 35, Geo. III. We append a description of this railway, and also some of the other early railways.

This line was $26\frac{3}{4}$ miles long, and was promoted by Mr. Samuel Homfray, whose firm, Homfray, Hill and Co., were the proprietors of the line. The railway was free for anyone to use with drams or trams of the specified construction, and on payment of certain rates per ton per mile that the goods were conveyed. The line commenced at Lower Layer, and ran side by side with the Glamorganshire Canal to Merthyr, with a branch from Quaker's Yard to Carm Mill, a distance of $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles; the width of land allowed to be purchased was limited to 7 yards. The cost of a single line railway was estimated at £1,600 a mile.

It was on this line that the first locomotive steam engine was tried; this was Trevithick's high-pressure engine, which ran on four wheels of 4 feet 6 inches diameter, and had but one cylinder, 8 inches in diameter and 4 feet 6 inch stroke. The piston-rod turned an immense fly-wheel, and the travelling motion was conveyed to the bearing wheels by means of cogged wheels. It was on 21st February, 1804, that this engine was first tried, and we read: "Ten tons of iron (long weight), loaded on tram wagons, with the additional weight of about 70 persons—for a great part of the way—were drawn for nine miles upon the tram road at the rate of nearly five miles an hour, by the use of one of these steam engines, fixed on its own wagon, made by Mr. Homfray. No supply of water for the boiler was found necessary for this distance."

It has been said that the word "tram" was a shortening of Ou-tram, the name of the person who was supposed to have first introduced the system; but since he did not do so till 1799, and we see by the preamble of this Act, obtained in 1794, they were already called dram, or tram roads, therefore we do not think this derivation of the word tram has been established.

Other early railways, constructed before this time, but without a special Act of Parliament—the necessary powers being obtained under the Canal Acts—were, the Bredon Railway from the Bredon Lime Works to the River Trent, in 1793; two lines under the Ashby-de-la-Zouch Canal Act, 34 Geo. III., one of which was $3\frac{3}{4}$ miles long, and the other $6\frac{3}{4}$ miles; while as long ago as 1738 railways were laid from Honithwaite and Woodhouse Collieries to Whitehaven Harbour.

The Surrey Iron Railway (Act obtained in 1801) connected Wandsworth and Croydon, and was 10 miles long and double throughout; the gauge was 5 feet 6 inches, and it was opened throughout in 1805. The rates varied from 2d. to 6d. per ton per mile; each wagon and load weighed about $3\frac{1}{2}$ tons; "the

wheels are 2 feet 5 inches high, of cast-iron, with 12 spokes, which get wider as they approach the hub, which is 8 inches long to receive a wrought-iron axle; the rims of the wheels are 2 inches broad, and nearly as much thick; the sharp angles are rounded off, so that these wheels are capable of being used without damage on any hard, common road, a very principal advantage attending the modern use of railways."

Donkeys were usually the motive power of this railway. This line was extended from Croydon to Merstham and Godstone.

Leatherhead and Thames Railway: Proposed in 1801, to run from West Molesey to Leatherhead, viâ Cobham.

Severn and Wye Railway: Projected in 1801, route from Lydney, on the Severn, to English Bicknor, on the Wyë, through the Forest of Dean. At a meeting, held on 14th June, 1802, the southern part of the line was abandoned, and the Dean Forest Railway proposed in its place; this latter line went through the town of Coleford.

Carmarthenshire Railway: Act 42 Geo. III. From the coast near Llanelly it extended for 15 miles northwards, and in the cuttings several rich veins of coal and lead were discovered. At Mynydd Mawr an embankment containing over 40,000 cubic yards of earth was constructed. The line was opened in November, 1804.

Hereford and Lydbrook: Proposed in 1802, to connect these two towns on the Wye by a railway.

Sirhowy Railway: Act 42 Geo. III. Length, 28 miles, commencing at Pill-Gwemlly, on the Usk, and terminating at Trevil. There were several branches to the several mines and ironworks, and one was proposed from near Tredegar Park to the River Severn, where a new seaport town, called New Amsterdam (? Newport), was laid out and begun to be built. One mile of the line was through Tredegar Park, and Sir C. Morgan, the owner of the park, was to construct this portion, and receive special tolls for its use. Should the line not be finished by Michaelmas, 1803, the authority to construct was to be withdrawn.

Stowmarket and Bury Railway: In December, 1802, it was proposed to connect these two towns by a railway.

Portsmouth and London Railway: This was the longest line up to 1803 that had been brought forward. Its London terminus was to be in Stamford Street, near Blackfriars Bridge. The estimated cost was over £400,000. After some little time the idea was entirely abandoned.

Swansea and Oystermouth Railway: This line was authorised by Act 44 Geo. III., and was opened in 1805. Its length was $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and it followed the seashore from Swansea, to the Mumbles Lighthouse. This railway is still in existence as an independent company.

Gloucestershire Railway: Proposed in 1804. Route from Bitton, on the Avon, near Bath, to Sodbury, with various branches to the coal mines in the district.

Dewsbury and Birstall: Opened October, 1805; length 3 miles. This line was the property of Chester and Sons, the proprietors of the Stubble Coal Mines at Bristol.

Wakefield and Hulleth Railway: Proposed in September, 1805; to be constructed from Wakefield to Hulleth Hall Coal Mines, with branches to other collieries in the vicinity.

It will be observed that none of these lines were for passengers, and on most of them the motive power was horses, although some were worked by fixed engines; and on others the weight of the full trucks descending pulled the empty ones up the incline, and as the steam locomotive engine was improved, that means of traction was adopted.

Naturally, some of these proposed lines were never constructed, although several of them were, and it is only right that they should have their proper place in the history of railways, which most people consider begins with the Stockton and Darlington Railway, whose Act of Incorporation was not obtained till 1821, and was opened September 27th, 1825. The prominence of this latter line centres in the fact of its being the first railway to adopt the locomotive engine as a permanent tractive power.

Amusements at a Country Station.

BY A GOODS AGENT, *Midland Railway.*

A LARGE notice board at the side of the passenger platform of a small junction on the Midland bears the legend "Hutton-Bunny: Change here for Skimford." I may say for the benefit of those who might otherwise lose time by making a search for this junction in the Station Handbook, that for reasons which will be obvious I have disguised the name. When, as a young man, I left my home in a large city to become a clerk at Hutton-Bunny, one of the first things I learned was that my duties commenced at eight o'clock in the morning and finished at the same hour in the evening. Good-bye, therefore, I said to myself, to cricket, football, and boating. My landlady was a widow who "took in" boarders in a double sense: the outlook therefore, as regards recreation, seemed decidedly gloomy.

I might of course have sought out the local Band of Hope or Mutual Improvement Class, but alas! in those days I thought "very small beer" of such things; while billiards or bagatelle demanded an outlay of cash which my slender means would by no means allow. Nevertheless, as the old saying runs, "Where there's a will, there's a way," and I found when I had mastered the routine of my duties that there were a good many odd minutes

during business hours which could be made to yield that amusement after which I had a very strong craving. Some of the "unco guid" among your readers will esteem me a youth of very degraded tastes, when I confess that I extracted a great deal of fun from the lowly sport of rat-hunting. For my part, I have never been able to see that a rat-hunt, or even a dog-fight, is a bit more brutal than a fox-hunt or pigeon-shooting. But I don't wish to defend my conduct, although I could instance the philanthropic Charles Kingsley, who dearly loved a fox-hunt; and as regards dog-fighting, probably most of your readers know the injunction in one of Dr. Watts' hymns:

"Let dogs delight to bark and bite,
For 'tis their nature to."

In the goods shed at Hutton-Bunny there is always lying a quantity of grain, waiting the convenience of the neighbouring farmers and millers. Fearful is the toll taken of such traffic by rats. Not that they confine their attentions to cereal food; by no means; a healthy rat is not particular in his tastes, and when pressed by hunger will dig his teeth into anything, from a swede turnip to a deal plank. A strange fact though is that while so catholic in his diet, the cheese which is sold at 4d. per pound, in Hutton-Bunny on market days, presumably for the consumption of farm labourers, is seldom interfered with by Mr. Rat; probably he objects to the very strong odour.

I remember working late in the office one evening; everybody had gone home, the shed was in darkness, and all was as quiet as the grave, except for the scratching of my pen. Suddenly there was a shrill squeak, then a scamper, then another squeak, and finally such a squeaking and squalling, that I put down my pen and opened the door softly to discover the cause of this unusual excitement amongst the rat community. I soon found the *casus belli* was a quantity of raw hides, some of which had small portions of flesh adhering. About a score of rats were indulging in a big feed and a free fight at this delectable banquet. So busy were they that they did not notice my appearance until a crane-handle which I despatched in their direction sent one of their number to "kingdom come."

On another memorable occasion a quantity of maize which had been lying on hand for months, was to be removed. "Old May," the foreman, knowing that the clerks were always on the *qui vive* for fun, came into the office and remarked that the sacks were half eaten away, and alive with rats. Clerical work was at once suspended. We were delighted to observe that the grain was stacked in a corner of the warehouse, so that it was easy to cut off the escape of the rats by placing an eight-inch plank across from wall to wall. For the information of those who wonder how a plank placed lengthways could prevent the escape of such a nimble customer as a rat undoubtedly is, I may say that when in a hurry he will run with his nose upon the ground the whole length of the plank, looking for a hole or a way underneath, but never thinking of jumping over it. As we moved the sacks, every now and again a rat would dart from among the grain, run

along the plank, and finding escape cut off, dash back among the remaining sacks. This continued until we had but three or four sacks left, and then "Jack," the station dog, who had been pulling his neck nearly off in his eagerness to join in the proceedings, was allowed to show what he could do as a vermin exterminator.

The way that dog laid them out was a caution to snakes"; not one escaped, and at the finish of the fray there were about a dozen very plump and well-fed rats *hors de combat*. It being market day, we tied them in a bunch by their tails, and hung them outside the shed, to the great amusement of the country folks. Perhaps your readers would like to know how we came to possess such a treasure as "Jack." Well, he was a "bit of property" which was "left" to us. Tommy Wainwright, the carman, to whom he more particularly attached himself, said he had belonged to a circus which gave a few performances in the town, but when the show departed the dog somehow got left behind. It was generally believed that "Jack" had been a terrific fighter in his young days—so much so, indeed, that to prevent further bloodshed his longer teeth had been filed or broken off. Notwithstanding this he was still a very awkward customer to tackle, as was fully demonstrated upon a famous day in the annals of Hutton-Bunny. It happened this wise. Tommy and the station dog were in the cucumber frame, called by courtesy "the goods office," when a young bricklayer entered, accompanied by a formidable looking bulldog, "all head and teeth." The two dogs did not agree, and commenced snarling. Said the bricklayer to Tommy: "You'd better take care of that mongrel, or he'll get hurt." "Never fear," says Tommy; "mongrel or not, the dog can take care of himself, although he is badly handicapped by the loss of his best teeth." I suppose I ought to be ashamed to narrate the fact, but the outcome of the argument was that every man and boy on the station, including good old Jenkinson, the stationmaster, adjourned to a neighbouring field to see "which was the better dog." In the result, the bulldog, greatly to the owner's disgust and chagrin, got a bad licking. "Jack," who had evidently been in many a "scrap" before, dodged his opponent's rushes by jumping over his head, or on one side; in fact, he was a thoroughly "scientific" fighter. At last, seizing a favourable opportunity, he gripped the bulldog by the scruff of the neck, and holding on like a vice, dragged and bumped his powerful enemy all over the field. The bricklayer, seeing his dog had no chance, cried *peccavi*, and we choked off "Jack" before much harm had been done. Henceforward he was more than ever the pet of the Hutton-Bunny station staff.



Narrow Escape of the Night Mail.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Caledonian Railway.*

ONE dark winter's night a heavy goods train came to a stand at the advanced starting signal at Fairglen, a country station on the P.Q. Railway, there to wait "line clear." Before arriving at this point the train had climbed six miles of a bank—rising 1 in 90. I may here state that the advanced starting signal above mentioned was over a quarter of a mile from the signal-box at Fairglen; but as the line for over a mile was perfectly straight to the south of the station, no inconvenience was experienced by the signalman in seeing trains standing at his advanced starting signal, unless during foggy weather, when, as was the rule, he kept all trains at his home signal until the line ahead was clear. The above goods train had been blocked an unusual time, and as it was getting close upon the time when the mail from the north was due, the signalman at Fairglen was getting not a little anxious. He had not sufficient siding room to shunt the goods train for the mail, and he could not shunt it on the down line, as that was strictly forbidden in the case of heavy trains; so if he did not get the goods away soon the mail would, in all probability, be seriously delayed. But just at this time the block instrument rang out the welcome signal "line clear" from the junction ahead. He promptly lowered his signal for the goods to proceed, and saw it, as he thought, starting away all right. The mail was now offered to him from the signal-box in the rear, which he accepted. He then turned to his desk to enter the various times of the above trains in his register book. After this he looked up the line to see what progress the goods train was making, when he was surprised to see it still standing at his advanced starting signal. He looked a second time, and now saw that it was not standing, but rapidly coming back on the wrong line. If it did not stop before passing his home signal, a collision between it and the mail would be inevitable. He heard the roar of the mail in the distance. Another minute and it would be in violent collision with the runaway goods train. The thought now struck him to turn the goods train, which by this time was close upon him, on to the down line. Quick as thought he pulled over the lever, and the next instant the goods train rushed past him, van first, on to the down line, and without the engine. By this time the mail was in sight, and the driver of it seeing the red lights of the runaway goods thought it was on the same line of rails as himself, promptly shut off steam, and did his utmost to bring his train to a stand, when, to his surprise and inexpressible relief, it rushed past him on the opposite line of rails. The mail then went on cautiously and stopped at the signal-box at Fairglen. The signalman had by this time got the engine of the goods train shunted into the siding, and after giving the driver of the mail a few words of explanation,

that train resumed its journey in safety. The goods train came to a stand at the foot of the incline without doing any damage, and after a little delay resumed its journey. The men in charge of it told the signalman that immediately after starting from his advance starting signal the coupling next to the engine snapped, and the train getting out of their control, ran down the incline as described. Thus the coolness and promptitude of the signalman prevented what would have been a disastrous collision. He is now stationmaster at Fairglen.

The Present Gauge of the Permanent Way.

BY A PLATELAYER, *Caledonian Railway.*

I THINK that a few remarks on the above subject will not be out of place at the present time, when high speed and heavy loads are the order of the day, as it must come up for discussion sooner or later, and the sum and substance of the question will be, Does the present standard gauge of the permanent-way suit all the requirements of this advanced age of railway engineering? My theories and opinions on this matter point to the negative, for several reasons. The majority of railwaymen, I think, will agree with me that the highest speeds have been attained within the last few years on our present gauge without unduly endangering the lives of passengers and servants; the records made it is hardly possible to eclipse without some alteration in our present system of permanent-way and rolling-stock. To go back to the time of the battle of the gauges, it is sufficient here to state that the merits of the several gauges were scrutinised by a Royal Commission appointed in 1845 to ascertain whether in future private Acts for the construction of railways provision ought to be made for securing a uniform gauge. The Commission of Inquiry was followed, in August, 1846, by an Act making it unlawful to construct any new railway of a wider gauge than 4ft. 8½in. in Great Britain, and 5ft. 3in. in Ireland. The chief principle of this enactment was earnestly contended for by Robert Stephenson, the great railway engineer of that time. One of the chief reasons why this gauge was chosen is that it was the gauge used for making the old wagon-ways and tram-roads of that period, and certainly not from any greater safety or better results which it could give. It was only a repetition of the old mistake in following the ancient customs and practices of the country, without any definite or proper reason for doing so. Another reason why the narrow gauge was chosen was, I believe, to minimise the extra expense which would have been entailed in choosing a broad gauge, for in the laying out of these railways a wider expanse of ground would have been required to be taken in for the extra breadth, which would have swallowed

up a vast amount of extra capital in the construction; but I think railway engineers were "penny wise and pound foolish" in this instance, though I suppose it is not right to criticise them too severely, for their opinions were then suited to the period in which they lived and worked for the welfare of the people and for the trade and commerce of the country. They were the old pioneers, feeling their way cautiously, not knowing what the future would bring forth; they were just sowing the first seeds, and the future of that seed was as a sealed book to them. The failure of the railway as a paying enterprise was predicted by some of the great and wise men of that time, though, like the millennium, it still belongs to the future. Neither have the people been driven to famine and want through the ravages of railway engineers and capitalists spreading over the country their network of rails.

We will now see what effect the narrow gauge has on the running of a locomotive working an express. I have been standing on the footplate of Caledonian 8-feet singles when travelling at a speed of 60 or 70 miles per hour, on a falling gradient, when it was next to impossible for the fireman to fire the engine, owing to the oscillating motion, due apparently to the shortness of the wheel base and to the boiler height, the boiler having to be placed high on the framing, owing to the great height of the driving wheels. There are only three pairs of wheels under these engines. Now, the rule applies here, and it is reasonable to suppose that, if the gauge were broader in this instance, it would certainly apply in a more beneficial manner to engines of less boiler height, or of the bogie type. I may state here that the latter class are universally liked, as they are easier on the permanent way, especially in rounding curves, when the strain on the outside rail is more equally divided between the bogie wheels, through the medium of the pivot or centre pin, whereas in the engine with the single pair of leading wheels the greatest pressure is directed against the one point. Now, the inside cylinder is the best engine for the narrow gauge, as the cylinders and all the heavy motion are placed nearer the centre of the gauge, which gives less side play and less oscillation, and is easier to ride on. Another disadvantage to high speed is the superelevation of the outer rail of curves in this way, that the theoretical cant to suit the equilibrium of a fast train does not suit that of a slow one, and especially running through junctions at high speed, where little or no cant can be got, there is a danger that none can shut their eyes to. Now, these are a few of the evils which attend our present gauge, and I maintain that if all future railways were constructed on a 5ft. 6in. or 6ft. gauge, it would banish many of these dangers which we are liable to meet at present, and we would get greater speed, strength, and safety combined. Any alteration of our present gauge would of course imply a great expenditure, not to speak of the rolling-stock, but if we wish to keep up with the great march of progress, then something must be done in the near future to bring us out of these difficulties.

Curious Scenes on the Railway.

Br R. M. N.

PASSENGERS who keep their eyes open while on their travels are frequently rewarded by witnessing very amusing and interesting sights. A little while ago, for instance, the occupants of a District Railway carriage noticed with amusement and sympathy an elderly gentleman who, in attempting to board the train while it was in motion, was dragged back by the guard. Entreaties, bribes, and threats were alike useless; the official retained his hold until his own van was rolling rapidly past, when he made an attempt to enter it. But at that moment the notion that revenge is sweet seemed to occur to the irate passenger, for, seizing the guard round the waist, he "hailed him back again," explaining that they must either travel together or not at all. On the arrival of the train at the next station the officials discovered, to their consternation, that the guard was missing.

A Friend of the writer, on one occasion, entered a train that was in motion, disregarding the caution of the railwaymen on the platform to "Stand back!" He was just congratulating himself on having caught the train when it began to slow down, and on putting his head out of the window to discover the cause of the stoppage, he found that it had pulled up in a siding, where it seemed likely to remain for some time. Much to his disgust, therefore, he was compelled to walk back along the metals to the station, where he was welcomed by a crowd of smiling officials, and the pleasing intelligence that his train had just left the platform.

We find so much difficulty in catching trains under ordinary circumstances in this country that, if we had the obstacles Dutch passengers contend with, we should probably give up the task in disgust. A short time back the writer was staying at The Hague, and wanted the bus to be ordered for the nine o'clock train to Amsterdam. "It will be here at half-past nine, sir," said the porter at the hotel. Inquiry elicited the fact that railway and ordinary time vary in Holland, so that the passengers not only have to make elaborate calculations before setting out on a journey, but may also have the pleasure of arriving at their destination half an hour or so before they have started!

A very laughable incident occurred in a North London railway carriage the other day. Just as the train was leaving a station a little man was bundled in by the guard, much to the disgust of a burly fellow in the corner, who shouted out that the carriage was full, and endeavoured to push the new-comer back on to the platform. The little man was naturally very indignant at this, and commenced criticising the conduct of his opponent in no measured terms, annoying the bully so much that at last he rose from his seat, and, towering above the other,

asked him what he meant by his remarks. This was evidently just what the new arrival wished him to do, for, with a sarcastic "Thanks very much!" he slipped into the vacated seat, and continued his remarks with such success that the other man, feeling public opinion against him, changed carriages at the next station.

Another objectionable traveller found himself "sat upon" rather effectively the other day in a smoking carriage, which numbered amongst its occupants a lady. Resenting her presence, the youth began to discuss the selfishness of women, who, while not smoking themselves, took up part of the inadequate space reserved for lovers of the weed. The lady stood these impertinent remarks for some time without flinching; then, to the evident discomfiture of the youth, she produced a neat little silver cigarette case, extracted a cigarette, and placidly commenced to smoke! On another occasion, however, it was a lady who came off second best. An old gentleman was puffing contentedly at his pipe in a smoking carriage, when a middle-aged dame entered, and, after a second or two, seeing that her *vis-a-vis* continued to smoke, sniffed vigorously, and gave other unmistakable signs that she disliked the smell of tobacco. Unable to stand this any longer, the old gentleman at last bent towards her, his pipe in his hand, and asked most courteously if she had any objection to smoking.

"Most certainly I have!" was the snappish reply.

"Then, madam," said the smoker, replacing his pipe between his lips, "I should advise you to get into another carriage!" She was not long in taking his advice.

The writer recollects a case in which a testy passenger, entering what he imagined was a non-smoking compartment, called upon one of its occupants to put out his pipe. Naturally, the man refused, and there was an angry discussion about the matter, which ended in the guard being called.

"Guard, this man insists on smoking in here," said the newcomer.

"Well, sir," said the guard, pointing to a label on the window, which the complainant had quite overlooked, "I can't stop him. It's a smoking carriage." The feelings of the newcomer can be better imagined than described.

An elderly party, somewhat short-sighted, who mistook a compartment labelled "Ladies" for a smoking carriage, had a very warm time recently, when several members of the fair sex arrived and found a horrid man filling their sanctum with tobacco smoke. So, too, did a festive youth who was daring enough to chaff some factory girls at one of the large London termini. The girls were going for an excursion into the country, and were crowded together into a carriage labelled "Engaged." "Are you all engaged?" asked the youth sweetly, popping his head in at the window. It did not come out again so easily, for a dozen muscular, though not masculine, arms dragged him halfway through the opening; and when his face did reappear, it looked very much the worse for wear and tear. The youth will probably fight shy of factory girls in future.

A Run for Life.

By A SIGNALMAN, *Great Western Railway.*

I SHOULD not be surprised if there are very many of my brother signalmen who could bring forward some most striking incidents that have come under their notice, especially so if their service has extended for the period of twenty years. My experience as signalman dates back to the year 1874, at a small roadside station on a single line. But though the station was comparatively small, it was none the less important, it being a crossing station where nearly the whole of the trains passed, or crossed each other. My duties at this place were very numerous, through having to assist in the various capacities of telegraph clerk, goods, parcels and platform porter; and in addition to this I often had to go to collect money that was owing to the company; and it was through my being sent to collect some money on one afternoon that I omitted a most important part of my duty.

The up goods, which was due at 4 p.m., had duly arrived and finished its work, and was then shunted into a long siding to allow a down passenger to pass. I usually awaited the arrival of this train so as to assist with the luggage and parcels; then I immediately proceeded to the points, these being, at that time, worked from the ground, and on arriving at the points, I awaited a signal from the booking-porter, when the line was clear for the train to proceed on its journey. I used then to open the points, and give the driver "Right away." On the afternoon in question I unlocked the points, pulled out the iron pin which held the lever over, but forgot to pull over the points; the consequence was the engine opened them, and the train passed through all right. After this I went and collected some money as requested by the stationmaster, and then went home to tea, afterwards returning to the station to resume duty.

It was a dark winter's night, and the first train due was an up passenger about 7.30, which had to shunt to allow another passenger train to pass. I accordingly put it out of the way, and no sooner had I done so than the booking-porter received "Train on line" for the down passenger train. After having "Line clear ahead," he endeavoured to pull off the home signal, which was one of the old-fashioned disc and cross-bar signals, but he was unable to get it right off. He at once called out to me, and said the home signal would not properly come off. Like a flash of lightning the thought struck me that the fault must be at the points through my forgetting to open them for the goods train, and also in not stopping to set them properly after it had run out of the siding. My mind was instantly made up what to do, and off I ran, at the same time asking the booking-porter to put the signal at full danger, but for some reason or other he did not do so, and seeing that the signal was showing half-and-half, I made the most determined effort to reach the points before the

approaching train. There it was now in my full view ; it passed the distant at danger, but having now to come round a slight curve, accounted for the driver seeing the white light. By this time most dreadful thoughts rushed through my brain as to what was to be the consequence a few moments hence. I was now almost breathless, but with all my energy I made one more desperate effort, and with only a few seconds to spare, I threw the light of my hand-lamp on the points, and there they were as I feared, just in a position for the approaching train to run off the rails. I grasped the lever and set it in its right position, just as the engine was twenty yards away. I now sat on the lever frame, and my first thought was to render thanks to the God of all mercy for granting me that strength of body I so much needed a few moments before. This narrow escape will, I believe, live in my memory as long as my faculties endure.

Damages for Personal Injuries.

BY A CLERK, *Great Western Railway.*

SOME weeks ago several cases were tried in which damages were sought to be recovered from various Railway Companies for loss of life and personal injuries sustained by passengers through accidents to trains in which they were travelling, and in most cases exemplary damages were awarded, the judge in one of the cases, on application for stay of execution being made by the Counsel for the Railway Company, pending the further decision of a point of law, only granting it on condition that the children were paid in full, and that the widow should be paid interest upon the sum awarded to her, whilst at the same time he expressed himself opposed to encouraging great companies, with unlimited means at their disposal, in fighting important questions of law at the expense of small people, especially when liability was admitted.

Now, although I consider it but right that Railway Companies should be made to pay, and that heavily, in cases where passengers are either killed or injured, yet I regard the principle upon which damages are at present awarded as eminently unfair to them, and I wonder greatly that they have not, long ere this, sought to bring about an alteration in the law on the subject, with a view of placing it upon a more equitable footing.

The law holds that it is part of the contract of a Railway Company, upon receipt of the legal fare from a passenger, to convey him safely to his destination, be he merchant or mechanic, lawyer or labourer, and should they all choose to travel in the same class of carriage on the same journey, they would pay precisely the same fares to the Company ; but should

the train in which they are travelling meet with an accident and the whole four of them get killed or injured, are the claims for damages, that are made in consequence, alike? In cases of personal injury, for example, claims are based upon the pecuniary loss sustained in consequence of the injured person being incapacitated from following his occupation, in addition to medical attendance, extra expenses incurred, etc., and whilst the merchant and the lawyer might be awarded perhaps £2,000 each by way of solatium, the mechanic and the labourer would think themselves fortunate if they recovered £200; yet the Railway Company received from them precisely the same sum of money as from their fellow passengers.

This is a most absurd and unjust principle upon which to assess damages. The portion of the fares, either first, second, or third class, allocated to the mere safe haulage of a passenger, and the maintenance and working of the road, is precisely the same, the difference in the fares charged being accounted for by the superiority of accommodation afforded; therefore as the margin out of which the Companies have to meet claims for personal injuries is the same for all classes, the amount payable should be the same.

In compiling the classification of merchandise, etc., due regard is paid to the value of the various commodities, their nature, liability to damage, bulk, etc., and the rates charged for their conveyance are fixed accordingly. This, of course, could not be done with regard to passengers, but the liability of the Companies for death or injury could be fixed at one sum for all classes, say £1,000 in case of death, or permanent total incapacity, and proportionate amounts in cases of less serious injuries, one half of such amounts being payable in cases of holders of half-fare tickets.

This would be an equitable arrangement all round; it would protect the companies from the rapacity and fraud of the more well-to-do claimants and their legal advisers, and it would ensure the payment of reasonable compensation to those who cannot afford to enter upon a long and costly litigation in order to obtain it, and who are now defrauded by the companies as a consequence. Those who consider their lives and limbs of more than the average value could effect a policy with one of the numerous Accident Assurance Companies up to any amount they thought proper, and they would, in the event of meeting with an accident, gain the advantage of obtaining (by themselves, or by their representatives) payment of the amount assured without the worry, trouble, and uncertainty of a long and costly lawsuit.



The Story of a Missing Box.

By H. W. W.

AN office not over luxuriously furnished, in which are about a score of men and youths, the youngest not being more than 13, whilst an old gentleman with white grizzly beard cannot be much less than 70.

It is the day staff of the D.L. Railway, and this motley lot have had to assemble together for various reasons. Several who appear to be in their best, evidently expect an appointment in some grade of railway life, whilst others are in the uniform of the company, some of whom are, doubtless, up for promotion. But the one whom our story concerns hardly expects that, and, by the way his brows are knit, is not in the best of tempers, although it is easily seen that this is not his usual expression.

The inner door is now opened, and a porter is shown out, and if the look his face wears is anything to go by, I think we must not be wrong in surmising that all the uniform men are not up for promotion.

A messenger now calls "Parcels Clerk Everest." At this all breaths are held, the occupants casting about to see who is the next to have the dreaded interview.

"Parcels Clerk Everest," or rather Ralph Everest, is the young fellow we have already introduced; he was about twenty years of age, the son of a porter at Darlton, where Ralph was also stationed, having reached his present position from signal-box boy.

On hearing his name called, Ralph at once advanced, and was ushered before the superintendent, who, with a severe glance, said: "Of course you are fully aware why you are here, Everest?"

"Can't say I am, sir."

"Then we had better go over the case together, although I'm sure you have no more forgotten than I that an insured box disappeared from your station and practically whilst in your charge."

"No, sir, that I haven't, and from the nasty insinuations I have had bear since, think it hardly possible that I ever shall."

"Then why not prove they have been misplaced? You gave the guard a signature for receiving it, yet when the box is applied for a quarter of an hour afterwards it cannot be found, and as you were the only one on duty at the time I think you should remember a little more about it, especially as you were aware of the value."

"I distinctly remember putting it by itself in one corner of the office, but who got it then I haven't the least idea, for, I am sorry to say, it quite slipped my memory until it was applied for."

"Are you sure no one came to the office between the time of its arrival and the application?"

"Of course there were several applicants for parcels, but no one came—that I can remember—whose business would take him to the corner in which the box was."

"Then I must say it is altogether a very unsatisfactory affair, Everest, and although I should be sorry to think you have the least idea what became of it, your statement is not what it should be, and at the least shows gross negligence, and I hardly think it safe for you to go to Darlton again."

"Thank you, sir. Then I take it, that after serving the company for seven years—with, I think, the best of characters—I am to be discharged, or at least reduced, for a mere suspicion, which is as unjust as 'tis possible to be?"

"I have not said that, Everest, although it is impossible for you to resume duty at Darlton again."

"Then I think it will simplify matters by resigning, sir, although I'm sure ere long my innocence will be proved."

"If that is what you think, Everest, perhaps it will be as well. I will instruct your stationmaster to pay what wages are due to you."

With this Ralph left, and I need hardly say his temper had not much improved.

On reaching home his story did not get the sympathy he thought he deserved, his father saying that had he waited patiently doubtless everything would have ended all right.

"But, father, you have no idea the nasty remarks I already have had to bear. Rather than have any more I will try my hand at some other work; surely I am not quite dependent on the D.L.R. Co."

"Yes, but whose hands are you on until you get another start? Goodness knows mine are already full."

"Never you mind, father; I'll see I don't sponge on you."

The following morning Ralph started for London, to see if he could procure an engagement of any kind there.

When the train had got about half way he was aroused from his gloomy meditation by a sudden application of the brakes, and the next instant, amidst numerous splinters and crashing of glass, the carriage in which he was riding was a perfect wreck.

With a good deal of difficulty Ralph succeeded in extricating himself from the debris, none the worse for the disaster; but the sight that met his gaze was terrible to look at: here and there were passengers trying to release themselves from their dangerous positions, whilst others could be seen under a pile of wreckage.

Ralph at once started to assist those less fortunate than himself, but casting his eyes along the line he could just see the signals off for a down train. Grasping the situation at once, he started for the signal-box which they had only just passed; with trembling feet he reached it, and threw up the signals just

in time to allow the driver to pull up before the wreckage was reached.

A glance round the box, and our hero saw the reason the down signals were off—the signalman appeared to be unconscious, and lay flat on the bottom of the box.

As no one made a move, Ralph decided to take charge of the box. After blocking all roads, he wired particulars to the chiefs asking for a breakdown gang to be sent, which was not long in appearing on the scene of the disaster, accompanied by the superintendent, who, after seeing everything necessary was being done towards restoring proper working, started to have an interview with the signalman.

I leave my readers to imagine his surprise when he saw who was in charge of the box, and I think it hardly necessary to repeat all that was said; it is sufficient to state that our hero soon acquainted him with the little he knew of the unfortunate mishap, and how he came to be there.

A day or two after this Ralph was agreeably surprised to receive a letter from the superintendent, advising him that the thief who had stolen the box of jewellery had been found, and requesting him to attend a meeting of the board of directors, which he did, and was rewarded by a suitable apology for the unjust suspicion he had had to bear, and publicly thanked by the chairman, and presented with a substantial sum, subscribed by the directors, for the services he had rendered them and the public by his cool and prompt action.

After most careful investigation, the only probable reason of the accident was that, when rounding the curve, through some unexplainable cause the wheels of the front carriage left the rails, thereby causing the remainder to follow.

On seeing this it so unhinged the signalman's mind as to render him quite helpless, and but for Ralph's prompt action the disaster would have been much more serious.



Is it Right to Cheat a Railway Company?

BY A RAILWAYMAN.

SOME people will doubtless think it is right if you can do it. Others, again, will say it is wrong to cheat anybody, even a railway company. A decision given recently will make many railway victims think that it is not only a right, but a very meritorious action to cheat a railway company if you possibly can.

A man had purchased a second-class ticket, and when the train came in he found every second-class compartment full, and people standing up in many of them. He went into a first-class compartment, and when the official came along for tickets tendered the excess fare, which was refused. The railway company summoned him, and he was sentenced to the usual fine, with costs.

I do not know how that case may appear to a lawyer, but to the ordinary man in the street it looks like an outrage. Here is a railway company that sells a man a certain article, and after it has taken his money and given him his receipt it cannot, or will not, provide what it has sold. It does not refund him his money, and does not even make an effort to fulfil its obligations. It seems to any common-sense person that the one that should have been fined was the railway company. Now the question comes up: Is that man justified in cheating that railway company until he gets back the amount he has paid in fines and costs? I heard this question seriously discussed by a number of gentlemen coming from the suburbs to the city in a railway carriage the other morning, and the unanimous opinion was that that man would be perfectly justified in cheating the railway company. I am not giving my own opinion on this, but theirs.

These gentlemen will doubtless be astonished to see their confessions in print, but they need have no fear. I shall not tell who they are, for the very simple reason that I do not know, although, even if I did, it would take some very hard cross-examination to get me to divulge their names.

The first man said: "The railway companies tell us that if there is not room in the class that we buy the ticket for, we should wait for the next train. I can say that I have waited on this line sometimes until five and six trains have passed, and could not get a seat. As a general thing, a business man cannot wait for another train. He makes his arrangements to come by a certain train, and if he misses that he is late at his office, and many of us cannot afford to do that day after day. I think under those circumstances that a person is perfectly justified in taking any empty seat he can find. It is their fault, not ours, that there are not carriages enough or trains enough."

Another said: "I will tell you an incident that happened to me a week or two ago, which shows that the company has no hesitation about cheating a passenger. I came down to a certain station on a second-class ticket, and in a second-class carriage

A ticket inspector followed me until I gave up my ticket, then he said: 'You came in a first-class carriage.'

"I denied it; but he repeated his assertion, said I had better pay the difference and not make any trouble about it; otherwise I would have to undergo the usual penalties, with costs.

"I knew it was no use in making a disturbance, so I paid the difference. Even if there had been anybody in the carriage that knew me, and could prove that I came in a second-class carriage, I could not afford to waste the time in going to the police-court about the matter. It was only a few pence; but next day I bought a third-class ticket and came down in a first-class carriage; this made me a little more even with the company."

"Supposing," said a third, "you had been caught that time again; what would you have done?"

"Well, I chanced that; but I think that every man who is cheated by a railway company manages to get even with it sooner or later."

The third man then related his experience: "I met a friend at my home station, and entered into conversation with him. He went into a first-class carriage, and I had to go with him. Before we got to our station an inspector came along, and, although I tendered him the difference in fare, he would not receive it, with the usual result that I was fined 40s. and costs."

"Well, you couldn't buy a third-class ticket and recoup yourself, as Jones did," said one of the men.

"No," replied the other; "but I recouped myself, nevertheless. It took two or three weeks to do it, but it was very effectual."

"Weren't you afraid you would be caught?"

"I made my plans in reference to that, and think the scheme could have been worked indefinitely; at least, until the railway company had found it out."

"Tell us how you did it."

"With pleasure," answered the schemer.

"When I went home that night I called at the booking-office and bought a first-class ticket. Next morning when I came to the station I bought a third-class ticket. The third-class ticket is red, and the first-class white."

"And the second-class ticket is blue," said one of the listeners, "please go on with your cheater, and don't give us elementary information."

"Very well. I took the first-class compartment that was next to the third-class carriages, and I rode the first day in safety. The second day an inspector came into the carriage, and I showed the first-class ticket, which I had as a matter of protection. He did not examine the date. During the time that I took to recover my 40s. and costs, an inspector came in on me six times, and every time went away satisfied. When I came to the station at which I got out, a step took me among the third-class passengers, and I gave up my third-class ticket and was never questioned. I have that first-class ticket in my pocket yet."

As he said this, the door swung open, and an inspector appeared: "Tickets, gentlemen, please." Every ticket was

shown; the cheater took out the first-class ticket and exhibited it to the inspector, who seemed surprised that a man with a first-class ticket should travel second-class.

"I think we ought to have that fellow in with us," said one of the crowd; "he would listen to the conversation with both pleasure and profit."

"I think," said another of the party, "that you gentlemen seem to be a little afraid of standing up for your rights. I don't believe in being trampled under foot by any railway ticket collector. It seems to me, if a man said that I came down in a first-class carriage when I knew I had come down in a second, I would have fought it out."

"What good would that have done you?" asked the victim.

"I would have done that for the satisfaction of the thing."

"Yes, the satisfaction of paying 40s. and costs."

"It is evident," said another, "that Brown has a story to tell. Come, Brown, out with it."

"Well, I bought a second-class ticket the other day on the Underground. On the platform I met a lady of my acquaintance. I did not ask her what ticket she had, but I opened the door of a second-class carriage, and we went on. She is a neighbour of mine, and on coming out at our station she handed me her ticket to give to the collector. It was a first-class ticket, and I handed him the two together—one second and one first."

"This won't do," said the ticket collector; "you will have to pay the difference between first and second-class fare for one."

"But," I said, "we came in a second-class carriage."

"It makes no difference what you say," replied the man; "we have to collect the difference when two tickets are handed in together, and we take always the highest fare."

"Very well," I said, "try that if you like. Here is my card, and you can summon me." And with that I left him. I have not heard of the case since."

"You see the difference between your case and mine," said the first victim, "is that you had a witness and I had not. Perhaps if I had a witness I wouldn't have paid the difference as meekly as I did." Then turning to me, the gentleman asked, "How do they arrange matters like this in your country? Is it 40s. and costs for everything a man can do on a railway?"

"Well, you see," I answered, "it isn't quite the same there. The conductor comes through and collects the tickets, and if you have not a ticket he charges fare, and if you won't pay fare he stops the train and puts you off; although of late years even that little diversion is denied the railway company, as they have to carry you to the next station and put you off there. Of course they can have you arrested for riding free, but that is very rarely done. In fact, the American jury loves nothing better than to get a whack at a railway company. Some men who have been put off apparently justifiably enough have sued the company and recovered heavy damages. That is the reason the companies are very careful now to put a man off at a regular station."

"Glorious country to live in," said one; "let's all emigrate."

"If I might make a suggestion to old travellers like yourselves," I said, "I might mention a plan that I think is better than any you adopt. I call it Jim Keene's plan."

"Who is Jim Keene?" was the query.

I told them that he was a millionaire sometimes, a bankrupt at other times, a big dealer in railway securities, and a man who cornered wheat now and again, but a person who was on the average a millionaire.

"All right, that is the kind of man we want to hear about. What is Jim Keene's plan?"

"Well, you see, Jim Keene used to do business in New York, and lived in one of the suburban villages some distance off. He came down to New York every day on a short line of railway that ran to his place, and he had a season ticket. One day Jim changed his vest and left his season ticket at the other end. The conductor came round and wanted to see the tickets. He said to him:

"You know me; I have a season ticket."

"It doesn't matter," said the conductor; "you will have to pay fare or get off."

"I'll show you my ticket to-morrow. You know that I have it all right."

"I know that you have it; but I must see the ticket every day or collect the fare. Your fare is 30 cents I want it."

"Well, you won't get it," said Keene.

"In that Keene was wrong. The conductor stopped the train and got a couple of stalwart brakemen to put off the speculator. The speculator showed fight, and one of his friends jumped up and paid the 30 cents, which put an end to the trouble. But still Keene was so angry that he began abusing the man who had paid his fare for him.

"When they got to New York, Keene, who kept getting madder and madder the more he thought about it, drove at once to the office of this railway company, and demanded of one of the officials to discharge this conductor. The official said the conductor had acted exactly right. Keene went to a higher official, and that official corroborated what the first one had said. He went up, and up, and up, until he came to the superintendent of the line. The superintendent of the line patiently heard the story, and then remarked that the conductor had merely done his duty, although he was sorry he had been so stringent with so well-known a man as Mr. Keene. The superintendent, however, refused to discharge the conductor. Keene went at once to Wall Street, told his broker to buy up a majority of the stock of the N. Y. and Z. Railway, and when Jim owned the road he discharged every one of the officials, from the president downwards to the conductor."

There was silence in the railway carriage for a few moments after I had related the experience of Mr. James Keene. Then one of the men meditatively took two shillings out of his pocket and gazed at it pensively. "I am afraid," he said, "that if our wrongs are to be righted by our purchasing this railway, they will go for a long time unredressed."

Carter Paterson and Co., Carriers.

BY STRUGGLES.

CARTER PATERSON AND CO.'S Express Parcels Delivery in London and its suburbs was established by a railway man. Mr. Paterson was chief clerk to a general goods manager at the time I was a stationmaster. I knew him very well, and remember that he was most energetic in his position.

In the year 1864 he conceived the idea of an express parcel delivery, and with the aid of the name of Carter the business was started with four horses and carts, and during his lifetime it must have outgrown even his expectations. I regret to say that both Mr. Paterson and his brother died some years since at a comparatively early age, and I have noticed that most of the successful men of business who live in towns die at an early age. It is, in my opinion, the excitement that kills them, and the unavoidable neglect of the laws of Nature. The successful man of business overtaxes his strength in many ways, both mentally and bodily, and when at last his health fails him he never regains it, because the whole fabric breaks up at the same time. A daily routine of desk-work is in itself injurious to health; but when to that is added the excitement of social duties always attendant on the prosperous man, together with the late hours occasioned, the man must be strong indeed who can withstand the ordeal.

From four horses and carts in 1864, the business has developed to the extent that to-day it includes a staff of some sixteen hundred hands and two thousand five hundred horses.

The idea is nothing more or less than an improved carrier's cart, calling twice or three times daily, the horse driven by the same man, and the whole number of carriers working in unity. It is surprising on inquiry to find the amount of personality that exists in the matter. Carter Paterson and Co.'s carts may be known everywhere, but the man who works a district is known better, and masters all new residents and their peculiarities from the day they come into the district.

I recollect the old country carrier's carts which were ultimately knocked off the roads by the trains; they were, in their day, quite an institution, and, indeed, the only means of locomotion open to the poor. "Slowcomotion," it might have been called, because it took a woman all day to go shopping, with the advantage of having to call everywhere on the way to the town, the day to spend in the town, and the same or more calls to make on the way home. Nevertheless, use becomes nature, and so much so that I remember a corn-dealer, a wealthy merchant, who was so accustomed to his ride in the carrier's cart on market-day, that he refused to go more expeditiously by train, and the

carrier's cart always picked him up for fifty years every market-day. Most carriers' vans accommodated some half-a-dozen passengers; every householder looked out for the carrier, and to him was entrusted all manner of commissions, from bars of iron for the blacksmith to a draper's parcel for the squire. Strange it is that the railways, having destroyed this old country business, have given birth to a new child of the same kind in London, where, with the exception of carrying passengers, the new work is a repetition of the old, and where the carman becomes again the agent of the householder, who knows she or he can intrust him to do their little commissions. It is extraordinary the multiplicity of these little commissions. Carter Paterson and Co. will take luggage for families to any railway station, and send a special van if necessary. They will take a single box to any station, and leave it in the cloak-room for the passenger, leaving the cloak-room ticket at the station for the passenger to call for, which practice, although it seems open to comment, does not bear record of miscarriage from the proper owner. They will take goods home and collect the value on delivery; they will remove your furniture, or even do the work of collecting, which should in due course be performed by the railway company on whose line the goods are to be consigned. Very many people do not know that the "pays on" charged for collecting might be saved by a postcard addressed to the railway company itself, and so good is the service, and so prompt the attention, that very many tradespeople, regardless of the charges, hand everything over to Carter Paterson and Co. for them to drop in its proper channel. At all the London receiving offices Carter Paterson and Co.'s vans may be seen collecting, as bees in search of honey. All their vans and carts are of one type, and they are to-day an almost indispensable institution and a household word. At the twenty-five depôts each man has his appointed place to back up at the platform, and overhead is his district marked up on the wall. He can see at a glance what belongs to his delivery, and when at night he has unloaded his van his day's work is completed. During the day he has three changes of horses, which are harnessed and unharnessed to his cart or van by the stablemen. The horses are light trotting carthorses of the Clydesdale or Shire cart-horse breed. At each depôt there is a head-stableman, and the stables are so constructed that if a carman happens to rent the basement of a house in London, which is sometimes the case, the horse is taken upstairs to bed, whilst the man goes underground to sleep. The business of cutting the chaff by steam and of blending the corn and bran with it is all performed at the head office, and sick animals are all treated at the Stoke Newington depôt. No doubt Messrs. C. P. and Co. will add a hospital farm to their extensive works, where lame animals can be turned to grass, because the cost of replacing horses must be a matter of £40 per horse, and some of them are most perfect animals of their class; they are all well fed, and the low price of hay must be a matter of additional profit to the owners. If you pass down any suburban street near London you will rarely ever fail to observe a card with C. P. printed upon it, stuck in

some front windows. This means that Carter Paterson's man is to call, and it is not likely he will fail to do so when his interest is so blended with that of his employers, as is, I am pleased to say, the case. C. P. and Co. contract with some large shopkeepers, such as Whiteley, Maple, Shoolbred, and others, to take all their parcels, either for a lump sum for the year, or at so much per parcel. The charges range from fourpence upwards; but if a parcel can be delivered by the man who collects it a charge of threepence only is made for the small parcel. In all matters of rates the Railway Clearing House classification is adopted, the offices are supplied with all railway rates, and can collect charges of any traffic, small or large, but, as will be seen, although C. P. and Co. work hand in hand with the railways, they at times have a great deal of discretionary power as to which railway they favour, and they are at the same time independent of railway work, on account of their own legitimate traffic. In fact, although they refuse nothing that comes in their way, they seek chiefly to add to their reputation by being a quick parcels delivery company. In this respect they are a boon to many who, wishing to remove from one situation to another, can consign their box or boxes to C. P., and either walk or take a cheap railway journey, thus saving the expense of a cab. One hears nothing of strikes or discontent amongst the staff, which are avoided through the wisdom of the founder of the firm, who was determined that the carmen—who are, after all, the mainstay of the affair—should work contentedly. To ensure this, Messrs. Paterson allow all their collectors one penny in the shilling on all goods collected, and this allowance is checked and paid every time the carman comes into the dépôt. This allowance brightens the eyes of the collector, who looks out for the C. P. notices in the windows with a personal interest. At the onset of the affair the collectors were allowed a penny on every parcel, but unfortunately the high wages that it ensured, amounting sometimes to £5 per week, led some of the men to abuse the generosity of their employers, and all had to suffer the reduction. At the present time it is no mean affair to be a carman to Messrs. Carter Paterson and Co., especially at Christmas time, when the carts are laden with presents which the overburdened railways are then only too glad to hand over to the quick parcels delivery company; and all the year round there are no printed instructions of stupidity relating to responsibility ending by the delivery at the house-door, or as to taking tips, etc. If boxes have to be brought from the top rooms, Carter Paterson's man is allowed to go in and carry them down, or he is allowed to carry them up. During business hours most of the suburban residents are glad of any assistance in this respect, and they are only too glad to avail themselves of the help of a respectable, honest assistant, for which they are willing to pay. So that the twenty-four shillings per week paid to the carman does not represent the amount of his income, and once a man has established his round and knows his customers he has every opportunity of turning his exertions to the best account, with no excuse for petty pilferings by doing work and not accounting for it.

At the Booking-Office Window.

BY A CLERK, *Isle of Wight Central Railway.*

WHAT a panorama of interesting and amusing scenes is presented daily at the booking-office window!—scenes, too, which are in many cases trying to the temper and patience of the booking-clerk. If we were to stand within earshot sometimes, and take stock of the ever-changing scenes enacted there, we should be better able to understand why it is that the average booking clerk says—with Mr. Gilbert's policeman—that his lot "is not a happy one."

Confined in a dark, oftentimes badly ventilated office, working at high pressure from the time he comes on duty till he goes off again, obliged to be continually on the watch against the numerous little swindling artifices to which so many of the travelling public are unfortunately addicted, his vigilance in this respect being intensified by his knowledge of the disagreeable fact that all losses, from whatever cause arising, have to be made good by himself—and that, too, out of a salary oftentimes not quite so much as that of an ordinary day labourer—small wonder then that he is at times curt in his treatment of disagreeable passengers.

But see! his window is open, the play is going to begin, and we will in fancy witness it.

First comes an old market woman, who marches boldly up with a "cheat-me-if-you-dare" sort of air, and demands a "single return to B——." The clerk, without any question whatever, hands her a return ticket, with which she, after closely examining it, marches off. Next comes a gentleman of the genus commercial, who, having probably forgotten to tip the porter, has been sent back by that individual to take an excess note for his luggage, such being over weight. This gentleman (?), of course, marks his appreciation of this by discharging at the poor booking clerk such a round of abuse as would have done credit to any cooster. Here comes a lady, fat, fair, and evidently over forty; she is accompanied by two young ladies, the younger of whom cannot be a day less than fifteen, but the lady calmly demands two tickets and a half, and having obtained them, walks on to the platform, doubtless congratulating herself upon her cleverness in doing the railway people, though probably some rather too inquisitive ticket-inspector will in a few minutes prevent the successful carrying out of her little swindle. Next comes a clergyman; his small restless eyes and shambling gait proclaim him to be of a mistrustful nature; as he gathers up his change he remarks, "I must count my change, I know what you booking clerks are," to which the clerk naturally retorts, "We are no worse

than some of you clergymen." An old gentleman comes next, and he, after picking up his ticket and placing it in his watch pocket, loudly asserts that the clerk has not given him one, and continues to do so until some bystander tells him where he has put it. It is amusing to note the various ways in which the tickets are asked for. Some evidently know what they want, and state their wants briefly in plain, business-like tones; others content themselves with simply naming the station to which they intend to travel, not stating whether they want a first, second, or third, a single or return ticket. Others, again, appear to be hopelessly confused by the word "single," thinking "single" means one ticket instead of one journey, one old gentleman asking for a "double return," meaning two return tickets. Several of the passengers have not got their money ready, and so keep the clerk and passengers waiting while they fish it out of the depths of their capacious pockets. It is astonishing also to note how few of the passengers appear to include the words "please" and "thank you" in their vocabulary.

But the train is due away, the bell is ringing, inspectors are shouting, and porters are touching their caps significantly at some of the carriage windows; there is a rush and a scramble, and a noisy, blustering individual rushes up to the window, and loudly demands "an officer's ticket to London." The clerk politely requests the production of either an order for the issue of an officer's ticket, or his card, which request is met by an indignant refusal; the clerk declines to issue an officer's ticket unless a card is produced, and the gentleman, after unburdening himself of language choice enough to bring a blush of envy to the cheek of even our friend the commercial, and threatening to report the clerk as a most insolent fellow, winds up by taking a *third*.

But this is the final act of the play, the whistle blows, the train puffs out of the station, the curtain—in the shape of the office window—goes down with a bang; and so we will leave the clerk to book up his train book, calm his ruffled feelings, and prepare for his next performance at "The Booking-Office Window."



The Story of a Trolley Ride.

BY A CLERK, *South Eastern Railway.*

“**M**ORNING, sir.”

“Ah! that you, Martin? The very man I want,” said Mr. Dixon, the well-known farmer of Tayton.

“Indeed, sir, what can I do for you?”

“Think you might put the trolley on and run me over to Eston? I want to catch the 10.40 up to town.”

“Well, yes, sir, I should think I dare, after the down express goods has passed. The signals are off: she’ll be through in a minute. In the meantime, Bill,” turning to his mate, “you can get the trolley ready.”

“Bill hardly looks strong enough for such work as yours, Martin; I suppose he suffers with ill health.”

“The very reverse, sir; he’s one of the strongest men we can raise, and I think you will admit some of us platelayers are not babies.”

“Indeed I will, Martin.”

“I’ll let the signalman know what we propose doing now, sir. I have no flagman to send in advance, so we must do without one.”

The person addressed as Martin is the ganger in charge of a length of line at Tayton, a small agricultural district, nearly all of which belonged to Mr. Dixon. Martin was a well-built fellow, just past his prime, a trifle dissipated, a little over the medium height, and the very picture of strength.

The only convenience the inhabitants had, by way of a station, was a siding at which a goods train stopped daily. This was under the charge of a signalman, whose duty it was also to attend to a pair of gates, as the only road Tayton could boast of crossed the line at this point.

Tayton siding was midway between two stations: Eston, the station north—an important junction a distance of two miles—and Fenby, south, about the same distance.

The road for the first mile and a half to Eston is perfectly straight, but just before reaching the station curves sharply, round which drivers are supposed to run cautiously.

“Now, sir! the express is through, and here comes Bill with the trolley. We must start now or you’ll lose that 10.40; she’s always sharp to time.”

“I’m quite ready, so let’s fire away, Martin,” said Mr. Dixon.

“I suppose there’s no possibility of anything overtaking us, is there, Martin?”

“Lor’ bless you, no, sir; there’s nothing due up for another hour, and should anything special leave (which is hardly likely), the signalman at Tayton is aware we’re on the road, and would

advise the driver to run with caution, or keep him at Tayton until he knew we had had time to clear."

This seemed to satisfy Mr. Dixon on that point.

"But I suppose it's not impossible for the signalman at Eston to start a down train on the up road?"

"No, sir, but that's hardly possible; something very serious must occur before he would be justified in doing so; nothing less than a train off the road, and I think we can rest assured of nothing so serious taking place."

"Well, I certainly hope so, Martin, for it would be a rough matter for us when turning the curve to suddenly find something on us, and no way to prevent a smash, for I suppose the trolly would throw the engine off, or otherwise injure it?"

"Yes, sir, the chances are it would. But may I ask what is putting all these queries in your head? It's not the first time we've done it, and we always have managed to pull it off."

"Yes, Martin, that's all very well; but when at Eston last week I saw a poster with the words 'Once too often' in large letters on it, and these words keep ringing in my ears, as, of course, I know you are breaking rules when you run me over on the trolly, and I'm afraid should it get to the ears of your chief, or if anything occurred, it would put you in a serious position."

"Oh, no fear of that, sir."

"The curve ahead is one of the worst on the whole of your company's system, I believe, Martin."

"Yes, sir, it's considered the worst."

"Let's see, Martin; wasn't it round this very curve where the runaway train was stopped?"

"Yes, sir, just on the verge."

"Do you happen to know the particulars, Martin? I never heard an authentic account. How was the train stopped?"

"It's about 14 years ago now, sir; I was then in the Eston length. The signalman there had a telegram from the station below Fenby to say that the up train did not stop at his station, and appeared not to have anyone on the engine. This of course caused a great commotion, for unless it was brought to a standstill before Eston was reached, something serious would occur, as at that time several trains were there, and more were expected immediately; so it would be an impossibility to get them all out of the way, and in another nine minutes the train would be upon them. Several of us started to meet it, hardly knowing what to do, but on the way we agreed that somebody must gain the footplate of the engine and bring the train to a standstill."

"By this time we had turned the curve, and the train was nearly on us."

"We had decided on Jack Foreman—a young cleaner—having first turn, who, should he succeed, would have the best knowledge of managing the engine."

"We were all very much excited, Jack having gone on ahead, so that if he should fail, another could take his place. As

the engine reached him, Jack gave a spring, managing to clutch the side, to which he clung like grim death, and gradually raised himself and gained the footplate, thus saving a lot of lives, and the damage of a good deal of property."

"He was a plucky young fellow, Martin."

"Indeed he was, sir, and I'm glad to say his gallant act received a suitable recognition."

"When the passengers heard what had taken place, and how probably most, if not all, of their lives were due to him, a hasty collection was made, and a substantial amount was got together and presented him, which came very acceptable to Jack, as for the past two years he had been endeavouring to get a home together, which he intended asking a young lady of his acquaintance to share with him. On receipt of the purse, this was Jack's first step, and I need hardly say his offer was gladly accepted, which to this day he never has regretted."

"A very proper ending, Martin; but what had become of the driver and fireman?" observed Mr. Dixon.

"Both were found on the line: the driver past all human help, and the fireman with just sufficient breath to say he had pushed the driver off for reprimanding him, and the next moment, regretting the deed, had followed."

"He must have been mad, Martin!"

"Yes, sir; it came out afterwards he had fits occasionally, and for the time was like a madman."

"We are now approaching the curve, Bill, so we had better reduce speed a little," said Martin.

Our party now proceeded in silence, when Martin, who had been looking intently ahead, exclaimed, "Good heavens! how are we to prevent a smash?"

The cause of Martin's exclamation was at the same time observed by the other two men. An engine, not more than 150 yards from them, was on the same line as themselves, running at a speed which Martin well knew to be impossible to reduce before it was upon them.

"Jump, Martin! jump! it's our only chance!" and as he spoke Mr. Dixon went flying out of the reach of danger.

"We must stick to it, Bill. On with the brake and into the six-foot; we'll try and heave it off," and as Martin finished the brake began to have effect.

It was now a fight for life, for unless the brave fellows succeeded in getting the trolly off they would inevitably perish.

Before it had come to a standstill they were in the six-foot; then began the work in earnest, for to get the trolly off was no mean feat, and in another moment the engine would be upon them.

"Now, Bill, we may do it; let's keep cool"; and as Martin spoke the trolly began to rise.

"I can hold no longer, Martin; let's save ourselves," exclaimed Bill.

"Now, man, one more heave and we shall do it."

Whilst Martin and his mate were thus engaged, Mr. Dixon had been frantically waving and shouting to attract the driver's attention, and was now in a paroxysm of fear and anxiety for the safety of the brave fellows, as the engine seemed almost upon them.

The engine-driver had now reversed his engine and applied the brakes, but with a loud snort the monster still came on; at the same time the trolley went rolling down the bank, and Bill, assisted by a shove from the engine, followed, whilst Martin sank down in the four foot and the engine rattled over him.

What has taken me so long to explain was but the work of a moment.

After the engine had passed Martin was too exhausted to stir, and lay as he had fallen.

I leave my readers to imagine the joy of Mr. Dixon and the occupants of the engine on finding him otherwise unhurt. Bill also escaped, with the exception of a bruise or two.

The reason the engine was on the wrong road was soon explained to Martin. It appears the express goods Martin had allowed to pass them before starting had run off the road at Fenby, and on that station telling the signalman at Tayton siding what had occurred, he, in his excitement, forgot all about Martin and the trolley, and gave permission to Eston to send the engine on with the district engineer, who was going to take charge of the clearance of the wreck.

When Martin and his mate found themselves before their engineer they fully expected they were in for it. Imagine their astonishment when he, in a voice which shook with emotion, said: "You are two brave fellows, and if you care to accept a more responsible position, I have one at my disposal which I think would suit you, Martin, and Bill could then succeed you."

"Thank you, sir; although we only did our duty; but if you consider I am worthy I shall be very pleased to accept it."

"I'm glad of that, Martin; now we must get on to assist at Fenby."

"One moment, sir," said Mr. Dixon, addressing the engineer; "Allow me to thank you, and, in my opinion, both Martin and Bill will soon prove worthy of still further promotion. I must now look alive or I shall miss that 10.40; so good-bye, and I think it will be some time ere I forget my last trolley ride to Eston."



A Good Word for the Railways.

BY A SUB-INSPECTOR, *London and North
Western Railway.*

MUCH has been said and written at various times about the shortcomings and delinquencies of railway companies in their dealing with the public generally, as very frequently individuals who fancy they have a grievance against some particular railway company make haste to rush into print and denounce the company in unmeasured terms for their treatment of everybody in general and themselves in particular.

Now let us see if we can speak a good word or two for the much abused railway companies, and instead of being ever ready to find fault (a gift, I may say in passing, which nature when fashioning man was not sparing of the quantity she gave out), try and look with a little partiality on the many comforts and benefits which through the medium of railways are conferred upon us. In the first place, then, there is no doubt the people of this country are more dependent upon the railways for the carriage and distribution of food in particular than those of any other country in the world, owing to the density of its population, and the limited area of land available for the cultivation of food in its two most essential forms, viz., corn and flesh meat. Though much of this is brought to our shores from other lands, to distribute the vast quantity necessary to feed our great population by the old system of canals, horses, etc., would be well nigh impossible; therefore, if only in this respect, we may feel thankful for our railways.

Secondly, let us look for a moment at the immense amount of pleasure and happiness which is conferred upon the very poor of our large towns, who, it is safe to say, but for the railways would never be able to get away from the smoke-laden atmosphere of their homes, to breathe the pure fresh air of the country; as witness the stations of the large towns at holiday times: see the crowd of toilers—men, women, and children—crowding into the trains, which will take them for a few hours away from their toil and daily surroundings to the green fields or the seaside, as the case may be, and which the iron horse will so soon reach. The smiling faces and boisterous shouts of these pleasure seekers for this one day are all good words for our railways.

Again, in times of sickness, for friends who are living wide apart, how convenient it is to step into the train and in a short time be at the bedside of the loved one, perhaps in time for a last word, whereas but for the railway the journey must be done by road at the expense of as many days as it can now be done in hours. These will give a good word for the railways.

There is also another class who will speak a good word for the railways, that is, provided the train is not delayed too much on

its journey, when in his impatience he has been known to ejaculate, "I could have walked over the ground quicker." I refer in this connection to Edwin when paying his accustomed visit to Angelina, whose home is a few miles distant. This individual thinks himself most fortunate that he lives in the times of quick trains that enable him to spend his spare hours with his inamorata.

The Westinghouse Triple Valve and Working.

By A FIREMAN, *Caledonian Railway, St. Rollox.*

WHILE not professing to describe the new quick-acting valve, I hope a slight description of the ordinary triple valve and its working will be interesting to many of your readers who are employed by railway companies using this most popular brake. The opponents of this form of brake have made great objection to the complicated nature of the triple valve; but a thorough knowledge of the working of this most important part of the brake shows that it is far from being complicated, considering the functions it performs. When air from the main reservoir is turned by the driver's valve into the main pipe, from which it passes along the branch pipes, it enters in at the side of the triple valve casing, down through an aperture, into the drain cup below the piston, and forces the piston up to the top of its chamber. In the side of this chamber, at the top, there is a small feeding groove cut, so that the air must push the piston to the top to bring it opposite the groove. The air then feeds through the groove, past the piston, into the auxiliary reservoir, until it contains the same pressure of air as the main pipe. Whilst in this position the port for the passage of air from the auxiliary reservoir to the brake cylinder is closed by the side valve. In this valve face there is a port which is open for the free escape of air from the brake cylinder into the atmosphere. The triple valve piston has now on both sides the same air pressure; and so long as this equality of pressure is maintained the brakes are off. If, however, the pressure below the piston is decreased by a discharge of air from the brake pipe, the piston is instantly forced down by the higher pressure above it. When the piston has moved down one-eighth of an inch, it closes the feed groove for the passage of air from the branch pipe to the auxiliary reservoir. The slide valve is fixed between two shoulders on the piston stem, while the graduating valve works inside the slide valve. One end of the graduating valve is attached by a pin to the piston stem, and moves with the piston. To apply the brakes gently, a reduction of 6lbs., at least, should always be made gradually in the pressure in the train pipe which moves the

triple valve piston down slowly. As soon as the piston moves down, it moves the graduating valve down also, uncovering a port in the slide valve. Air then enters through a hole at each side of the slide valve, and passes up through the centre of this valve, and out through the top port in the valve face. The further downward movement of the piston brings down the slide valve until this port in the valve face comes opposite the pipe leading to the brake cylinder, into which compressed air from the auxiliary reservoir immediately flows, and applies the brakes. This latter movement of the slide valve closes the exhaust port from the brake cylinder to the atmosphere. As soon as the pressure on the top side of the piston and auxiliary reservoir is reduced to that in the main pipe by the air rushing into the brake cylinder, the piston moves slightly up, cutting off the passage of air to the brake cylinder by closing the graduating valve, while the slide valve still retains its position. This causes whatever pressure is in the brake cylinder to be retained, and the brake is applied with a force proportionate to the reduction of pressure produced in the main pipe. If the air pressure in the train pipe is again slightly reduced by a second application of the brake, the tripple valve piston will move down, opening the graduating valve without moving the slide valve, and so on in repeated applications. The slide valve being fixed on the piston stem, the piston and graduating valve can move a quarter of an inch, either up or down, without moving the slide valve. In ordinary applications of the brake the triple valve pistons will only move down half of their travel. If, however, a rapid and considerable discharge of air is made from the train pipe, the piston and slide valve will be forced down to the limit of their stroke, thus opening up the free passage of air from the auxiliary reservoir, past the top of the slide valve into the brake cylinder, without bringing the graduating valve into action. And so the brakes are applied with full force. To release the brakes, a pressure of air from the main reservoir is again admitted by the driver's valve into the train pipe, from which it passes along the branch pipes into the triple valve below the piston. This pressure, being greater than that in the auxiliary reservoir above the piston, forces it and the slide valve up. In this position, the centre port in the slide valve face is opposite the pipe leading to the brake cylinder, and the bottom port in the slide valve face is opposite the exhaust port cut through the triple valve casing, and through these ports the air escapes from the brake cylinder into the atmosphere, while at the same time the auxiliary reservoir is being re-charged by the air feeding through the groove past the piston. This groove is very small, being only about one-thirty-second of an inch in depth, and one-sixteenth of an inch in width: consequently, when drivers with a limited knowledge of this part of the mechanism under their charge apply the brake and release it again, two or three times successively, the brake becomes ineffective, although the pressure of air in the train pipe, as indicated by the gauge, may be sufficient to again apply the brakes. But this air, in such cases, is on the wrong side of the triple valve piston, not having had time to feed through this small groove

and re-charge the auxiliary reservoir between releasing the brakes and re-applying them. This mode of manipulating the brake accounts for a majority of the so-called brake failures. It is supposed to take about 10 seconds to re-charge the auxiliary reservoirs, but sometimes these small grooves get partly filled up with dirt, consequently it takes about a minute. This important part should be thoroughly understood by all drivers working the brake, as it is this part which gives it its automatic action. The bottom nut of the drain cup should be unscrewed occasionally, to drain off the water which may accumulate therein.

A Runaway Couple.

THE CHIEF CLERK'S STORY.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *North Eastern Railway.*

"I CANNOT boast the experience of 'Ben Bolt,'" said the vice-chairman, with a knowing look towards the stationmaster at the other end of the table, who was supposed to be that notable person himself; "but life behind the wire-netted window is not wholly devoid of novelty; in fact, the booking-office is a place of vantage from whence much can be seen and heard which, in the hands of a skilful writer, could readily be turned into hard cash, and there need be no fiction about the tales either. The amusing incident, in which I had a small part, occurs to me now as being suitable for an 'after-dinner story.'

"It happened in the early days of my railway life when a junior clerk at — Station. I was on night duty, and had got quite settled down for 'forty winks' after the night express had left, about 'the wee sma' hour ayont the twal,' and before the night mail arrived, which would set the morning trains astir on the branch lines. But just as I was dozing away into dream-land, having laid aside my pipe, for I was an early smoker, the rattle of wheels was heard outside in the portico, and before the vehicle was drawn up a rough, husky voice asked in hurried tones of the porter in attendance if the express had left. 'Just gone about ten minutes ago, sir,' was the laconic reply of the porter; at which came forth the response from his interrogator, 'Oh, d——!' Then, after a moment's silence, the porter was queried regarding the number of passengers who had booked by the express, where they were for, and if any ladies were among them. For answer to the two former questions the party was referred to the booking office, the porter contenting himself with giving satisfaction on the third, saying there were three ladies among

the number. Immediately there was a knock at the office door with heavy knuckles, and before I had time to invite my morning visitor inside, he turned the handle and walked in, when I beheld the big, burly form of a butcher alderman, in full evening dress, whom I knew to be a person of repute in the town. Following in his wake was a seedy, cadaverous-looking creature, of the opposite repute in the town, who followed the questionable occupation of a private inquiry officer and debt collector.

"'Good morning, young man,' said the alderman, steadying himself as he spoke by leaning against the ticket rack, for he had evidently been feasting 'not wisely, but too well,' and then followed rapidly the questions addressed to the porter outside. Having overheard the conversation, I was prepared to answer him in every particular he yet required information upon, and gave the number of passengers booked as eight, with their destinations, four being to London, two to Liverpool, and one each to Manchester and Birmingham.

"'Were the tickets single or return?' asked the private detective, with an air of deep knowledge in hidden things. 'All singles,' I made answer, 'excepting those to Birmingham and Manchester, which were returns.' 'Ah, very good, that reduces the area of our search, Mr. —,' he said, addressing the alderman, who had now collapsed on to the top of the copying-press bench, and seemed disposed to give up the rôle of questioner to his man of business. Then he queried 'if any ladies came to the window for tickets, and if I noticed particularly what they were like.' To this question I answered that no lady had booked by herself; the tickets were taken by gentlemen in each case. That being so, 'What were the gentlemen like?' came the next query; 'were they young or old, tall or short, well or ill clad?' To all this I replied as best I could, giving a description of the three gentlemen in each case, who happened to be all young and prepossessing, with every appearance of being well-to-do and on holiday bent, or perhaps on the actual honeymoon tour.

"Having got all the information I could give him, the self-styled officer turned to consult with his employer; but by this time the alderman had gone off to sleep, in the midst of all his trouble, and it took the two of us some time before we got him wakened up. When he came to himself sufficiently to understand the state of affairs as I had told the debt collector, he cut the reverie of his adviser short by asking if I could wire to the next stopping station of the express and order the authorities there to detain the whole three couples till he arrived by the following train.

"'But we have no warrant to effect the arrest of one couple, much less than three,' pleaded the detective. But the alderman, in his maudlin condition, was obdurate, and reminded the other that he was a J.P., which made him a law unto himself, especially as his daughter was concerned in the matter. However, I put an end to such risky work, as far as I was concerned, by saying that the telegraph office was closed for the day, and any message could only now be sent by the signalman, who was responsible for this work during the night.

"'Will the signalman send my message?' asked the alderman, in an enraged tone, and was now thoroughly awake again, and began to realise the possibility of being baffled in his pursuit. But I could only refer him to that exclusive individual, saying I would get the porter to show him along to the signal cabin with his hand-lamp. Thither the pair went under the charge of the porter, while the J.P. swore like a trooper against the scoundrel that dared to abduct his 'child,' saying he would stop a hundred passengers to lay hands upon him.

"The signalman heard the alderman's story from his own mouth, as the latter had now sufficiently recovered his senses to dispense with the services of his guide and interpreter, and being a paterfamilias himself, with marriageable daughters, he sympathised with the big man before him, whom he knew as a 'city father,' and a message was despatched under the S.P. code to the next stopping station, acquainting the authorities there of the affair, and asking their help. But the signalman would not risk ordering the arrest of the passengers, and counselled the alderman accordingly. So they were simply 'shadowed' by the men at the next station, with the aid of a town detective, who was called in for this duty when the tickets were being collected and examined. Back came a reply very shortly, saying the couple for Liverpool alone answered the description sent, and that they had lost the connection thence, owing to the express being late, and would have to wait the next train, which connected with the mail from —.

"Armed with a copy of this message, the alderman and the detective returned to the booking office, and, taking tickets for —, seated themselves beside me to wait the arrival of the mail, both seeming well pleased at the turn of events and the thought of a certain and easy capture of the runaway pair. By this time passengers were beginning to drop in for this train, which had more local connections than the other, and I had opened the ticket window in time to enable them to book with ease and comfort. Among the first to appear at the open grating were two young ladies, well wrapped up for midnight travelling; but I easily recognised in one, through a thick veil, the supposed runaway daughter of the man within, whom I knew by sight coming about the station. Of course, I took no notice of this fact, as my duty as booking clerk was to supply tickets to whoever came to the window, provided always they possessed the necessary coin of the realm; but I stepped back sufficiently in getting the ticket required to enable father and daughter to effect a mutual recognition for themselves, and so bring about the disillusionment of the former with a surprise of another kind for the latter. But the old gentleman had heard his daughter's voice in conversation with her companion at the window, and recognising it, he drew back from view so that he could not be seen by her, while he watched all that was going on outside. Beckoning the debt collector to his side, he communicated the strange intelligence to him, and with a look of mingled surprise and consternation on their faces, they both prepared themselves for further developments of an already complicated situation. Nor had they long to wait, for closely following the two young ladies to the window

came a youthful Romeo, who, taking a ticket to the same place, joined them at the opposite end of the booking hall and engaged in a quiet conversation. The enraged father saw all this, and consulting his adviser once more, the latter was sent outside to secure the services of a constable, so that the second arrest, which the alderman J.P. had now in his own hands, might be effected legally by an authorised officer. When the debt-collecting detective returned with the policeman, the supposed run-aways had gone on to the platform, where the three detectives followed them, but keeping in ambush until the train arrived, having decided to make the supposed capture in the carriage, when the delinquent pair were actually seated ready for their journey.

"As soon as the mail drew up at the platform the three young people all took seats together in the same compartment, which was already tenanted by three other passengers, and placing their luggage in the racks, settled down for the ride. Having seen this last act of the drama coolly performed before his eyes, the alderman emerged from his hiding-place with his two attendants, and going forward to the carriage, opened the door, and, without a single word of explanation to anyone, ordered the constable to arrest the young gentleman, at the same time commanding his daughter to alight and return home with him. The constable proceeded to execute the order given him by first asking the young man to step from the carriage, and this command not being instantly obeyed, he forcibly ejected him on to the platform, amid the screams of the two ladies and the protestations of the other passengers against being molested by a stupid policeman and a more stupid alderman, who would give no explanation for their conduct. The incident caused a scene for a moment in the station; but once the trio were safely deposited on the platform again, with their belongings, the guard blew his whistle, and the mail steamed away, leaving the supposed run-aways behind to give and ask satisfaction of their capturers.. This was done before leaving the station sufficiently to let anyone know who heard the conversation, that the alderman had been cruelly hoaxed by some practical joker at the banquet that night, who evidently knew more of the family arrangements than he did himself. The two young ladies were cousins, and their journey had been hurriedly arranged the previous day to visit a sick relation; and, to ensure catching the early train, the eloping Juliet had gone out to sleep at the house of her friend that night. Thus it was that she was found absent from bed when her father went home in his cups to test the truth of what had been told him of her intentions to make a runaway match. Then regarding the bonâ-fides of the supposed Romeo's appearance on the scene, the young gentleman was setting out on a business journey for his father; so the meeting of the young people was purely accidental; but the possibilities of such a thing happening were present to the mind of the joker when he decided to hoax the alderman.

"The affair was the talk of the town for the usual term of seven days, and before gossip ceased the J.P. had gone away to

take the waters for a month at some health resort; while the debt-collecting detective took down his brass plate and cleared out for good. Then of the pair originally 'shadowed' as the probable runaways, it transpired afterwards that they were a young married couple actually on their honeymoon.

"Now, it only remains to be told, as completing my tale, that this contretemps resulted in the two young people who were made to figure in it rather conspicuously going away afterwards on a railway journey, together, when they were runaways with the consent of all parties."

Mrs. Fitchester's Fix.

BY A CLERK, *Midland and South Western Railway.*

A GOOD many years since, when I was agent at Stoke Pogis, a town noted for its restless wholesale grocers, who were miserable unless they could rake up a claim for damages about twice a week against the railway company, I came across some odd characters, but certainly none who gave more trouble than the Honourable Mrs. Fitchester, of Hoymount, a little place on the Enford Road, and about a mile from our town. Hoymount, so called, had originally been three cottages of the "wattle and dab" order, but they had been turned into one dwelling, a wall built round them, and a wire fence put on top of that. Besides her Ladyship, the inmates were two horsey-looking men and two women servants. Tradesmen soon found out that ready money or any other payment was the exception, and even Queen's taxes could get no farther than a door with a small wicket, or peephole, through which Mike or Tim, with a most excellent brogue, would assure you that "Her Ladyship" was not at home. Wicked rumour had it that she had more of the flavour of the stable than the drawing-room about her, and whether the Honourable George had married her from a circus or a travelling theatre was an unsettled question. At any rate it did not take the Stoke Pogis tradesfolk, or we railway folk, very long to find out what was wrong, as the Honourable George only visited us with a return ticket from London on Sundays, carefully returning the same evening. He was said to be heir of the Marquis of Kerry, but that did not seem to help him much. At last even Queen's taxes lost patience, and as a small matter of twenty pounds was owing, our worthy County Court bailiff, who had grieved bitterly through inability to get a bite, got extra help, and arrested, not Mrs. F., but her pony trap and the two ponies, drawn up on a racecourse at our annual meeting, leaving the lady to get home on foot, after a display of some choice samples of language not usually put in print.

However, my trouble was not with taxes or butcher's bills, but arose through her Ladyship taking a trip to London one day, and, on tendering a cheque to the booking clerk in payment for her ticket, was told that he could not change it. This offended her, and finding also that I was not on the station, having really been out collecting goods accounts, she wrote a long letter to our general manager, the result being that I had a sharp reprimand from the superintendent for being away at train time. I did not think at the time I should be able to get even with her, but not many weeks after I noticed a strange address on a parcel that had just been brought in from the train. It appeared to contain a dress, and was from the well-known London milliners, Messrs. Ayre and Rabitskin, addressed to "The Honourable Mrs. Fitchester Fityscue," Stoke Pogis. On my asking the parcels porter what he meant to do with it, he said, "Oh, deliver it to Hoymount, I suppose." I told him to suppose nothing of the kind, as I could see something wrong. The fact was that a few weeks previous, through a change of Government, the Right Hon. Fitchester Fityscue, a prominent politician, had been appointed Secretary for Ireland, and at that time was engaged in catching and bottling a number of our Irish friends, who had dared to agitate for seven days a week and unlimited overtime, or some such heresy; and I could see that the Hon. Mrs. F. had assumed a second name that did not belong to her. Telling the man not to send out the parcel, as there must be some mistake, I at once dispatched a letter to the senders in London, and asked instructions, at the same time giving them a few solid facts about her ladyship. Next morning on my arrival at the station I found to my confusion that either Mike or Tim had called and taken away the parcel, having got it by favour of the night watchman after we had all gone home. To my disgust, also, about ten o'clock a telegram arrived from London asking me to return the parcel and a letter would follow. But in a few minutes' time, to my relief, Mike came in with the parcel, with a second address to a house in London pasted over the original, her ladyship being really in town all the while. On my asking him how he accounted for the second name on the address the reply was, "And sure Fityscue was her ladyship's maiden name." I did not argue the point, but took the parcel and quickly put a second wrapper and yet another address, this time to Messrs. A. and R. in London.

The sequel was satisfactory, to me at least. Three or four days later a letter came from the London milliners, with their thanks, and saying that, although they had already trusted one lot previously to this, they had me to thank for saving them from a possible heavy bad debt, as no doubt the same game would have been tried again. They also begged my acceptance of six of their best silk handkerchiefs, which arrived the same day, and were fully approved of by my wife.

The remark of the parcels porter that "Her Ladyship didn't get the best of that deal" was very true, but I was well content that I had for once got the best of the Honourable Mrs. Fitchester.

A Lesson in "Spiritualism."

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Great Eastern Railway.*

MOST of your readers are familiar with the gangs of workmen belonging to various railway departments who travel hither and thither in pursuit of their respective callings. There are, for instance, the "old gangs" of platelayers, for ever changing their scene of operations in the work of "relaying" this or that section of the line; there are the gangs of operatives in the telegraph department, going to and fro repairing or renewing the apparatus under their charge; and there are gangs of signal-fitters, paying special attention to the patent methods of communication between signalman and drivers. In the performance of their various duties these gangs of men are more often than not away from home, and in their dinner hour we get to learn something of their peculiarities or eccentricities. You may see them squatting on the railway bank or on the floor of some building, unpacking and disposing of their "tommy," and generally making themselves as comfortable as circumstances will allow. There is nothing extra to pay for mingling with these men at "feeding time," but, for all that, it often happens that you get an insight into quite a new feature of their characteristics at such times. Maybe all thoughts of work are temporarily banished from their mind, and between the whiffs of the after-dinner pipe you may hear many a joke craked, many a yarn spun, many a lecture on the leading topics of the day. Perhaps one among the number is an ardent politician, and he is busy advertising the many qualifications of the Party he believes in, and exposing in vigorous style the many shortcomings of the "other fellows" in the opposite camp. Or an enthusiastic sportsman may be recounting the latest exploits of the race-course, the cricket-field, or even the prize-ring. Perchance one of the gang has a daily paper, and is reading something of interest to his mates—something which afterwards forms a subject for discussion. And so, in sundry ways and divers manners, the dinner hour is whiled away.

So much by way of introduction leading up to the circumstances surrounding the lesson on "Spiritualism" given in the store-room below my signal-cabin on a recent occasion. Strange place this to select for a mid-day *séance*, but it came about in this way. One of a gang of five fitters—who had been for some days engaged taking old arms out of signal-posts and replacing them with new (made to act on a "go to danger" principle, should a wire chance to break)—happens to be a true believer in the reality of spiritual manifestations. He believes it to be possible to hold converse with the spirits of those who are departed hence and who are no more seen. Indeed, he professes to have proved for himself the genuineness of the spiritualistic doctrine. The question is one

which he has made his own, and he is for ever giving vent to the faith that is within him. His fellow-workmen pour ridicule on the idea; but, nothing daunted, he sticks most tenaciously to his creed, and marvels at their dulness of comprehension. And so it happened that the other day our spiritualist friend came to work prepared to give an object lesson during the dinner-hour, in order to prove beyond all cavil that the affair was perfectly genuine. His apparatus consisted of a glazed frame on which was printed in large capitals the alphabet and the numerals. At the top right hand corner was the word "Yes," at the opposite corner, "No." In other positions on the board were the words "Good," "Bad," and "Good-bye." With this he had a small table about the size of a man's hand, and it appeared from our instructions that this table was to work the oracle. Its duty was to move about in a mysterious way on the face of the frame when the "communication" was effected. It was to be the medium between ourselves and the spirit world, and was to work of its own accord as "moved by the spirit."

We were told in grave and solemn tones that in order to ensure success it was necessary to yield up our power to this apparatus—which our spiritualist teacher called a "weezer," or something of that sort. We were enjoined to exercise "patience," and the assurance was given that our teacher had already found out "some wonderful things" by means of this lettered board and miniature table. One of our students ventured to suggest that we likewise need a fair portion of "gullibility" to mingle with our "patience," in order to obtain good results. But at this our tutor fires up, and stoutly maintains that his spirit-summoning "weezer" is not the fraud it is presumed to be by sceptical unbelievers. He goes on to warn those who scoff and jeer at his apparatus to be wary of the consequences of their frivolity. They knew not what spirits might even then be hovering round them, and a time might come, when they least expected it, when they would bitterly regret their light-hearted and light-headed scepticism. Then he proceeds to further explain the wonderful mysteries connected with the science of converse with unseen spirits, until one seems to have an uncomfortable creepy feeling stealing over the system, and a sort of subdued wish to stand well with the invisible spirits now about to appear. I tried to obtain an assurance from our spiritualist teacher that he would take care not to leave behind him any of the spirits he was about to summon from the "vasty deep," because—well, you see, I have to spend many hours in solitary confinement, and if I were to be suddenly confronted by one of these spirits at a time when workmen who go about in gangs were sleeping the sleep of the just, I am not quite certain that I have language at my command fitting to the occasion. But our teacher pays little heed to the yearnings of my mind to be made easy on this point, and he quickly numbers me with the other ignorant scoffers with whom he has to contend. Altogether the lesson cannot be said to have been given under the most favourable auspices, for scepticism was the "predominant partner" at our *séance*. Gullibility was a bad second. Indeed, one of our students found it exceedingly difficult to preserve that grave,

expectant demeanour which I should think is indispensable in lessons of this nature. His boisterous hilarity was constantly breaking forth to the disgust and annoyance of our tutor. Warning and entreaties were alike thrown away on this individual; his mind was steeled against the reception of spiritualistic logic, and the gravity and solemnity of his mate simply provoked his merry peals of laughter to overflow point. Under such circumstances it will occasion no surprise when I say the lesson was a failure—we got no “communication,” and our teacher was unable to demonstrate the genuineness of his faith and the effectiveness of his “weezer” to the audience there and then assembled. He rather complained of not having had fair play, and after all, the dinner hour is none too long for a manifestation of this nature. We got no “results” from the “weezer,” and certainly there were no “results” ensuing from the lesson such as would add to the spiritualists’ ranks. Indeed, there were some among our company who thought the lesson might tend to have a contrary effect to that intended—might even shake the faith of our teacher, notwithstanding the grand results he professed to have obtained on former occasions.

The Acceleration of Passenger Trains.

BY A RAILWAYMAN.

IN travelling by fast long-journey passenger trains in this country one cannot fail to be struck by the utter disproportion of the number of passengers carried to the weight hauled by the engine, by the delays at junctions and other important stations, caused through examination and collection of tickets, transfer of luggage, parcels, milk cans, etc., both from and to the train, and the stoppages of from five minutes up to half-an-hour to give passengers opportunities to patronise the railway companies’ refreshment rooms.

The actual running time of such trains is at the present time exceedingly good; but, good as it is, it might be greatly improved by reduction of unnecessary dead weight. The delays at stations due to the carriage of baggage, parcels, etc., could also be done away with by removing their causes, and thus the running of passenger trains could be so accelerated as to make in the future a throughout speed of sixty miles an hour the rule rather than the exception. The running of mixed passenger and goods trains has now almost become a thing of the past in this country, except upon small, out-of-the-way branch lines, and it is about time that the carriage of passengers became a distinct branch of railway working. The baggage, horses, carriages, dogs, parcels, milk, meat, fish, and similar traffic should no

more form part of the load of a passenger train than should ordinary merchandise or mineral traffic.

To accomplish the acceleration of passenger trains on these lines would be neither expensive to the companies, nor difficult to carry out.

Anyone in the habit of noticing the long-journey trains run by our great railway companies, on their departure from or arrival at the large centres of population throughout the country, must be familiar with the fact that hardly one-sixth of the seating accommodation in the carriages is occupied by passengers; consequently, the unproductive dead weight of the train is out of all proportion to the paying or live weight, which means an enormous waste of money in the cost of locomotive power, to say nothing of the wear and tear of the comparatively empty coaches; so needlessly hauled backwards and forwards over the road.

To reduce this unproductive dead weight, it would only be necessary for the companies to do what has been repeatedly advocated—that is, to construct their vehicles on the type of the American cars, to charge but one rate per mile, with an additional charge for the use of a parlour or sleeping car when run on the train.

By the adoption of this principle, what now forms a train of sixteen, eighteen, or twenty coaches could be reduced to one of four, or, at the outside, five cars, no more than moderately filled, the weight of which would be less than one-half of the other. The train could be heated throughout with steam pipes supplied from the engine, the conductor or guard could examine or collect tickets and afford all requisite information to passengers *en route*, whilst their baggage, consisting solely of such light and small packages as they could carry in their hands and dispose in the car without inconvenience to their fellow-passengers, would be the cause of no delay at stopping stations. Lavatories and a buffet would of course have to be provided on all such trains, and would prove such sources of comfort to travellers, especially females, as would cause them to shower down blessings on every managerial head that became alive to their necessity and established them upon the trains of his company. Nor would the foregoing be the only benefits derivable from the substitution of the open car for the compartment coach. The outrages which are reported, almost daily, as having been committed in the compartments of railway carriages would become no longer possible, and both men and women would no longer be compelled to travel by railway at the risk of their lives, honour, or property.

The advantages to be derived from the separation of passenger traffic, pure and simple, from parcels, baggage, mails, etc., traffic are not confined to the traveller alone. The railway companies would come in for a very fair share of the benefit. In the first place, they would derive a considerable income from the carriage of passengers' luggage, which at present they carry free in the luggage vans. Then by the running of special trains

for the conveyance of the miscellaneous traffic now carried by passenger trains, they would enormously develop and increase that traffic, and be enabled to abolish the running of fast goods trains, by which, as a result of senseless competition, merchandise is conveyed between many of our principal cities and towns at passenger train speeds, but at goods train rates.

The evolution of railway working, as of everything else, is from the general to the special, from the universal to the particular, and it is about time the fact became fully recognised by the directors and managers of our railways.

“Trespassers will be Prosecuted.”

BY A PASSENGER GUARD, *London and North Western Railway.*

NOTWITHSTANDING the large number of notice boards bearing the above inscription which are placed in the most conspicuous positions by our railway companies, to try and prevent people from trespassing on their property, there are hundreds of persons daily who totally ignore the sensible warning thus issued, and persist in walking along the line, to their own possible detriment. Looking at the matter from all sides, a sensible man would naturally conclude that the public road offered him the most reasonable prospect of getting home safely, after a hard day's work. Perhaps it would take him half-an-hour, or probably more, that way to reach his home, but that, I should think, is preferable to taking a short cut along the line and risking the chance of being summoned for trespass, or being brought home to his wife and family a mutilated corpse.

There is not a week passes without the daily papers containing one or more cases of railway trespassers having been cut down by an express train or a heavy goods, their bodies being dismembered and mangled almost beyond recognition, while families are left behind to mourn the loss of the bread-winner.

The notices emanating from the railway companies with regard to trespassing are as much for the guidance and safety of the public at large as for the preservation of their own property; and it behoves them to prosecute those persons who wilfully set at nought the warning conveyed, by converting the line into a public pathway.

The fact that they intended to take up every case which came under their notice, and have the offenders sharply dealt with, would inevitably produce a salutary effect on the public, and it would convince them that it would be to their advantage to keep to the high road in future.

So long as the companies deal laxly with the subject, however,

so long will they have their fences broken down in places, and a noticeable increase in the number of trespassers. Those men who habitually take these dangerous short cuts invariably induce others to follow their example when they see that they can do it with impunity.

No doubt the authorities often find it a difficult matter, in certain neighbourhoods, to deal satisfactorily with the trespassers, especially where they have a rough lot of workmen to contend with who have for some considerable time used the railway as a foot-road to their homes. In many cases of this description, where they have been at last compelled to assert their right of way, the men whom they have placed there to warn the trespassers off have been seriously assaulted while doing their duty. Of course, this only makes matters worse for the delinquents when they are brought before the magistrates, but at the same time it should teach the companies a wholesome lesson, and make them put all trespassing down with a firm hand whenever they become cognisant of it. By doing so they will prevent many thoughtless members of the community from endangering their lives for the purpose of saving a few minutes; especially those gentlemen who consider themselves too "fly" to be caught napping by a railway train, even if it is an express. Their sarcastic assertion to this effect may be true, generally speaking, but having been accustomed to walk to and fro along the line when they felt so inclined, they take to it some night when they are not exactly in their sober senses and, sad to say, never reach home alive.

It is not with the grown-up persons alone that the companies have to combat in this respect, for dozens of children and youths of all ages may be seen swarming about the embankments in the suburban districts of our large manufacturing towns, and placing small articles on the metals for the trains to run over. Being young, they cannot properly understand the danger there is attached to this apparently harmless amusement, and as some of the most daring of them run considerable risks of getting killed out of mere bravado, it seems to the observer that some effectual measures are required to stop these youthful trespassers. "Boys will be boys," it is true, but the railway is an unsafe place for all concerned, when they utilise such a spot to exercise their boyish and distinctly mischievous propensities. When we find youths in their 'teens interfering with points and exposed signal levers, climbing the ladders and smashing the coloured glasses attached to the signals, breaking the earthenware insulators on the telegraph poles, and otherwise making themselves obnoxious, it seems to be high time for the strong arm of the law to make itself felt, and that in no uncertain manner. It is something more than the mere thoughtlessness of youth that causes these young roughs to commit such depredations, and the more drastic the measures which the authorities employ to put them down, the less likelihood there will be of some appalling disaster occurring, involving great destruction of life and property.

A case came under my notice a few months ago, where a youth placed an obstacle on the line just outside the station, but luckily without any serious consequences, as the next train was timed to

stop there, and when the engine caught the obstruction it was, of course, traveling slowly. The obstacle, however, was quite sufficient to make the engine leave the metals and plough the permanent way up for some distance before being brought to a stand. Now, had such an accident taken place at a less favourable spot between stations, when the train was travelling at a high rate of speed, it would be impossible to estimate the amount of damage which might have been done.

Such mischievous acts as this, performed by youths who are quite old enough to know better, require something more than a milk-and-water treatment to prevent a repetition, for if the offenders are young, they evince a destructive spirit, which requires a suitable punishment to curb it while there is yet time.

London and Birmingham Railway.

By A FOREMAN, *London and North Western Railway.*

THE idea of the London and Birmingham Railway was first projected by Mr. Barker, a solicitor practising at Birmingham, and George Stephenson, who was then the engineer for the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. Much criticism was put forward against the scheme at the time, and one writer, speaking of the projectors, stated: "A very respectable solicitor, but still a solicitor, and ignorant of carrying work, and a very talented engineer, but still an engineer, and by necessary consequences imbued with all partiality for his own machinery and engineering. In this case we have not even the single guarantee which under the most favourable circumstances is all that the joint project of a lawyer and engineer can solve."

Many were the reasons put forth against it, as it was to pass through a country with few towns of any note. Coventry was the largest, and at the time was the seat of the ribbon weaving trade. An anonymous writer, who signed himself "Investigator," published in 1831 a pamphlet upon the proposed London and Birmingham Railway, and many a choice bit of news is given to us by it as showing the feelings of some of the ancients regarding railways. Speaking of the route as regards Coventry, he states: "The coach travels faster than it is intended the engines shall travel with goods, there is small chance of smashing by collision with another coach, and no fear of blowing up by the bursting of a high-pressure boiler; and, therefore, the manufacturers of Coventry will pause, and never be such fools as to send their property in a way by which it will go farther and fare worse." But the manufacturers of to-day in Coventry appreciate the rapid means of transit, for it is of great benefit to them.

Rugby was at the time only a small place, and was only noted for its (now famous) school. It was not on the coach road from London, but only on a branch road. The main coach

road from London to Birmingham and Holyhead passed through Dunchurch, three miles from Rugby, and passengers for Rugby had to change coaches there at the Dun Cow.

From Rugby to London the proposed line passed through the agricultural counties of Northampton and Buckingham.

But in spite of all criticism the line was made, and was afterwards a very successful one. From June, 1838, to March, 1839, over 430,000 passengers were carried, or over 1,600 per day, producing a revenue of £262,000, or about £950 a day.

Not a bad start for a new system. The fares were as follows:—

London to Birmingham, 30s. and 20s.; London to Rugby, 24s. and 16s. 6d.; Birmingham to Coventry, 4s. 6d. and 2s. 6d.; Birmingham to Rugby, 7s. and 4s. 6d.

Soldiers were charged 9s. 4d. from Birmingham to London. Carriages paid 75s. and 55s.; horses, 50s.

The total cost of the line was estimated at five millions for the $112\frac{1}{2}$ miles, or about £44,000 per mile.

Seven tunnels had to be cut, of which the largest, Kilsby, near Rugby, is 2,398 yards. This tunnel cost £300,000 to make.

The line rises gradually, until at Birmingham the station is 250ft. above the station at Euston. Birmingham (New Street) Station is 367ft. above sea-level.

The speed upon the London and Birmingham Railway was very fair too, for in 1839 a speed of 40 miles had been attained with a load of 34 tons.

The line was first laid with iron rails and stone blocks, of which about 35,000 tons of rails and 152,000 tons of stone blocks were used. Far different riding on a line laid in that style to the present system.

The line has been a great success from the beginning, and has been of immense benefit to all along the route. Rugby especially has risen from a small town to the prominent position it now holds, and its success is due to the railway.

Birmingham also has derived incalculable benefit from it, in spite of the dire calamities that were foretold by the writer I previously quoted. He gives this warning to Birmingham: "Birmingham is a large, an industrious, a spirited, and a thriving town, certainly, but it were better for England that Birmingham were at the bottom of its own coal-pits than that the ruin of the Midland counties should be hazarded; and it would be better for Birmingham to preserve them as they are than hazard such a catastrophe, even by the transit of ten thousand more gun-barrels and gas pipes. Loaves of bread and legs of mutton are the primary good after all, and as the number, and the ease and cheapness with which they can be brought to market depends more upon good cross-roads than upon rail-roads, those who are wise will pause before they bring the loaves and mutton into jeopardy, or even enhance the price of them, even for the sake of running a race with their own bones and necks against fracture and dislocation at the rate of 15 or even 20 miles per hour."

The Examination of Season Tickets.

BY A SIGNALMAN, *Midland Railway.*

RAILWAY passengers who are holders of season tickets appear to think that that fact ought to be known by all officials whose duty it is to examine or collect tickets; and we generally find that when asked for "tickets, please," they do not deign to notice, or at best give the collector but a vacant stare, thus making themselves masters of the situation altogether, the collector perforce having to take what ordinary tickets are offered him, and passing the rest as season ticket holders. Frequent cases of passengers attempting to evade payment by passing themselves off as season ticket holders prove that this unsatisfactory manner of checking is easily taken advantage of by unscrupulous persons.

Railway Companies have a rule to the effect that all persons travelling must produce a ticket, season ticket, or pass, unless personally known by the collector as a season ticket or pass holder, and it is this conditional exception which makes the rule unworkable, for when a few are allowed to pass without the trouble of showing tickets, it is bound to follow that others will claim the same privilege. At small stations where this class of passengers numbers but few, they may be easily recognised by the staff, but at stations where the number runs into hundreds, it is impossible for any man to know "who's who." Some time ago the L. and Y. Company issued a circular to each of their season ticket holders, asking them to assist in protecting the company from fraud, by showing their tickets when called upon each and every time they travelled, at the same time advising the staff at each station on their line to see each passenger's ticket, whether known to be holders of season tickets in date or not. For a time this worked admirably, until at small stations a few were allowed to pass in the old way, with the result that at most places passengers who did not offer ordinary tickets are passed as season ticket holders. If the tickets were only issued from the beginning of each month, it would considerably lessen the uncertainty of the collector's duty, for if he has a good knowledge of the contractors, he is placed in further difficulty by tickets expiring at any date, and not always being renewed. Until, however, contractors are made to show their tickets each time they travel railway companies cannot expect to be free from defrauders. Providing a person has sufficient "check" to put on an unconcerned look, and does not try the dodge too often, he can provide himself with free railway travelling between a town and a suburban station where season ticket holders form the majority of passengers. If it happens that he is asked point blank for his ticket, he can always tender the fare, which would in most cases be accepted.

THE END.

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